

THE
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THE
CORNHILL
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THE LAST TURNING

THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

JANUARY, 1866.

Wives and Daughters.

AN EVERY-DAY STORY.

CHAPTER LX.

ROGER HAMLEY'S CONFESSION.



ROGER had a great deal to think of as he turned away from looking after the carriage as long as it could be seen. The day before, he had believed that Molly had come to view all the symptoms of his growing love for her,—symptoms which he thought had been so patent,—as disgusting inconstancy to the inconstant Cynthia; that she had felt that an attachment which could be so soon transferred to another was not worth having; and that she had desired to mark all this by her changed treatment of him, and so to nip it in the bud. But this morning her old sweet, frank manner had returned—in their last interview, at any rate. He puzzled himself hard

to find out what could have distressed her at breakfast-time. He even went so far as to ask Robinson whether Miss Gibson had received any letters that morning; and when he heard that she had had one, he tried to believe that the letter was in some way the cause of her sorrow. 'So far so good.' They were friends again after their un-

spoken difference; but that was not enough for Roger. He felt every day more and more certain that she, and she alone, could make him happy. He had felt this, and had partly given up all hope, while his father had been urging upon him the very course he most desired to take. No need for "trying" to love her, he said to himself,—that was already done. And yet he was very jealous on her behalf. Was that love worthy of her which had once been given to Cynthia? Was not this affair too much a mocking mimicry of the last? Again just on the point of leaving England for a considerable time! If he followed her now to her own home,—in the very drawing-room where he had once offered to Cynthia! And then by a strong resolve he determined on this course. They were friends now, and he kissed the rose that was her pledge of friendship. If he went to Africa, he ran some deadly chances; he knew better what they were now than he had done when he went before. Until his return he would not even attempt to win more of her love than he already had. But once safe home again, no weak fancies as to what might or might not be her answer should prevent his running all chances to gain the woman who was to him the one who excelled all. His was not the poor vanity that thinks more of the possible mortification of a refusal than of the precious jewel of a bride that may be won. Somehow or another, please God to send him back safe, he would put his fate to the touch. And till then he would be patient. He was no longer a boy to rush at the coveted object; he was a man capable of judging and abiding.

Molly sent her father, as soon as she could find him, to the Hall; and then sat down to the old life in the home drawing-room, where she missed Cynthia's bright presence at every turn. Mrs. Gibson was in rather a querulous mood, which fastened itself upon the injury of Cynthia's letter being addressed to Molly, and not to herself.

"Considering all the trouble I had with her *trousseau*, I think she might have written to me."

"But she did—her first letter was to you, *mamma*," said Molly, her real thoughts still intent upon the Hall—upon the sick child—upon Roger, and his begging for the flower.

"Yes, just a first letter, three pages long, with an account of her crossing; while to you she can write about fashions, and how the bonnets are worn in Paris, and all sorts of interesting things. But poor mothers must never expect confidential letters, I have found that out."

"You may see my letter, *mamma*," said Molly, "there is really nothing in it."

"And to think of her writing, and crossing to you who don't value it, while my poor heart is yearning after my lost child! Really life is somewhat hard to bear at times."

Then there was a silence—for a while.

"Do tell me something about your visit, Molly. Is Roger very heart-broken? Does he talk much about Cynthia?"

"No. He does not mention her often; hardly ever, I think."

"I never thought he had much feeling. If he had had, he would not have let her go so easily."

"I don't see how he could help it. When he came to see her after his return, she was already engaged to Mr. Henderson—he had come down that very day," said Molly, with perhaps more heat than the occasion required.

"My poor head!" said Mrs. Gibson, putting her hands up to her head. "One may see you've been stopping with people of robust health, and—excuse my saying it, Molly, of your friends—of unrefined habits, you've got to talk in so loud a voice. But do remember my head, Molly. So Roger has quite forgotten Cynthia, has he? Oh! what inconstant creatures men are! He will be falling in love with some grandee next, mark my words! They are making a pet and a lion of him, and he's just the kind of weak young man to have his head turned by it all; and to propose to some fine lady of rank, who would no more think of marrying him than of marrying her footman."

"I don't think it is likely," said Molly, stoutly. "Roger is too sensible for anything of the kind."

"That's just the fault I always found with him; sensible and cold-hearted! Now, that's a kind of character which may be very valuable, but which revolts me. Give me warmth of heart, even with a little of that extravagance of feeling which misleads the judgment, and conducts into romance. Poor Mr. Kirkpatrick! That was just his character. I used to tell him that his love for me was quite romantic. I think I have told you about his walking five miles in the rain to get me a muffin once when I was ill?"

"Yes!" said Molly. "It was very kind of him."

"So imprudent, too! Just what one of your sensible, cold-hearted, commonplace people would never have thought of doing. With his cough and all."

"I hope he didn't suffer for it?" replied Molly, anxious at any cost to keep off the subject of the Hamleys, upon which she and her step-mother always disagreed, and on which she found it difficult to keep her temper.

"Yes, indeed, he did! I don't think he ever got over the cold he caught that day. I wish you had known him, Molly. I sometimes wonder what would have happened if you had been my real daughter, and Cynthia dear papa's, and Mr. Kirkpatrick and your own dear mother had all lived. People talk a good deal about natural affinities. It would have been a question for a philosopher." She began to think on the impossibilities she had suggested.

"I wonder how the poor little boy is?" said Molly, after a pause, speaking out her thought.

"Poor little child! When one thinks how little his prolonged existence is to be desired, one feels that his death would be a boon."

"Mamma! what do you mean?" asked Molly, much shocked. "Why

every one cares for his life as the most precious thing ! You have never seen him ! He is the bonniest, sweetest little fellow that can be ! What do you mean ? ”

“ I should have thought that the squire would have desired a better-born heir than the offspring of a servant,—with all his ideas about descent, and blood, and family. And I should have thought that it was a little mortifying to Roger—who must naturally have looked upon himself as his brother's heir—to find a little interloping child, half French, half English, stepping into his shoes ! ”

“ You don't know how fond they are of him,—the squire looks upon him as the apple of his eye.”

“ Molly ! Molly ! pray don't let me hear you using such vulgar expressions. When shall I teach you true refinement—that refinement which consists in never even thinking a vulgar, commonplace thing ? Proverbs and idioms are never used by people of education. ‘ Apple of his eye ! ’ I am really shocked.”

“ Well, mamma, I'm very sorry ; but after all, what I wanted to say as strongly as I could was, that the squire loves the little boy as much as his own child ; and that Roger—oh ! what a shame to think that Roger —— ” And she stopped suddenly short, as if she were choked.

“ I don't wonder at your indignation, my dear ! ” said Mrs. Gibson : “ It is just what I should have felt at your age. But one learns the baseness of human nature with advancing years. I was wrong, though, to undeceive you so early—but depend upon it, the thought I alluded to has crossed Roger Hamley's mind ! ”

“ All sorts of thoughts cross one's mind—it depends upon whether one gives them harbour and encouragement,” said Molly.

“ My dear, if you must have the last word, don't let it be a truism. But let us talk on some more interesting subject. I asked Cynthia to buy me a silk gown in Paris, and I said I would send her word what colour I fixed upon—I think dark blue is the most becoming to my complexion ; what do you say ? ”

Molly agreed, sooner than take the trouble of thinking about the thing at all ; she was far too full of her silent review of all the traits in Roger's character which had lately come under her notice, and that gave the lie direct to her stepmother's supposition. Just then they heard Mr. Gibson's step downstairs. But it was some time before he made his entrance into the room where they were sitting.

“ How is little Roger ? ” said Molly, eagerly.

“ Beginning with scarlet fever, I'm afraid. It's well you left when you did, Molly. You've never had it. We must stop up all intercourse with the Hall for a time. If there's one illness I dread, it is this.”

“ But you go and come back to us, papa.”

“ Yes. But I always take plenty of precautions. However, no need to talk about risks that lie in the way of one's duty. It is unnecessary risks that we must avoid.”

"Will he have it badly?" asked Molly.

"I can't tell. I shall do my best for the wee laddie."

Whenever Mr. Gibson's feelings were touched, he was apt to recur to the language of his youth. Molly knew now that he was much interested in the case.

For some days there was imminent danger to the little boy; for some weeks there was a more chronic form of illness to contend with; but when the immediate danger was over and the warm daily interest was past, Molly began to realize that, from the strict quarantine her father evidently thought it necessary to establish between the two houses, she was not likely to see Roger again before his departure for Africa. Oh! if she had but made more of the uncared-for days that she had passed with him at the Hall! Worse than uncared for; days on which she had avoided him; refused to converse freely with him; given him pain by her change of manner; for she had read in his eyes, heard in his voice, that he had been perplexed and pained, and now her imagination dwelt on and exaggerated the expression of his tones and looks.

One evening after dinner, her father said,—

"As the country-people say, I've done a stroke of work to-day. Roger Hamley and I have laid our heads together, and we have made a plan by which Mrs. Osborne and her boy will leave the Hall."

"What did I say the other day, Molly?" said Mrs. Gibson, interrupting, and giving Molly a look of extreme intelligence.

"And go into lodgings at Jennings' farm; not four hundred yards from the Park-field gate," continued Mr. Gibson. "The squire and his daughter-in-law have got to be much better friends over the little fellow's sick-bed; and I think he sees now how impossible it would be for the mother to leave her child, and go and be happy in France, which has been the notion running in his head all this time. To buy her off, in fact. But that one night, when I was very uncertain whether I could bring him through, they took to crying together, and condoling with each other; and it was just like tearing down a curtain that had been between them; they have been rather friends than otherwise ever since. Still Roger"—(Molly's cheeks grew warm and her eyes soft and bright; it was such a pleasure to hear his name)—"and I both agree that his mother knows much better how to manage the boy than his grandfather does. I suppose that was the one good thing she got from that hard-hearted mistress of hers. She certainly has been well trained in the management of children. And it makes her impatient, and annoyed, and unhappy, when she sees the squire giving the child nuts and ale, and all sorts of silly indulgences, and spoiling him in every possible way. Yet she's a coward, and doesn't speak out her mind. Now by being in lodgings, and having her own servants—nice pretty rooms they are, too; we went to see them, and Mrs. Jennings promises to attend well to Mrs. Osborne Hamley, and is very much honoured, and all that sort of thing—not ten minutes' walk from the Hall, too, so that she and the little chap may easily go backwards and

forwards as often as they like, and yet she may keep the control over her child's discipline and diet. In short, I think I've done a good day's work," he continued, stretching himself a little; and then with a shake rousing himself, and making ready to go out again, to see a patient who had sent for him in his absence.

"A good day's work!" he repeated to himself as he ran downstairs. "I don't know when I have been so happy!" For he had not told Molly all that had passed between him and Roger. Roger had begun a fresh subject of conversation just as Mr. Gibson was hastening away from the Hall, after completing the new arrangement for Aimée and her child.

"You know that I set off next Tuesday, Mr. Gibson, don't you?" said Roger, a little abruptly.

"To be sure. I hope you'll be as successful in all your scientific objects as you were the last time, and have no sorrows awaiting you when you come back."

"Thank you. Yes. I hope so. You don't think there's any danger of infection now, do you?"

"No! If the disease were to spread through the household, I think we should have had some signs of it before now. One is never sure, remember, with scarlet fever."

Roger was silent for a minute or two. "Should you be afraid," he said at length, "of seeing me at your house?"

"Thank you; but I think I would rather decline the pleasure of your society there at present. It's only three weeks or a month since the child began. Besides, I shall be over here again before you go. I'm always on my guard against symptoms of dropsy. I have known it supervene."

"Then I shall not see Molly again!" said Roger, in a tone and with a look of great disappointment.

Mr. Gibson turned his keen, observant eyes upon the young man, and looked at him in as penetrating a manner as if he had been beginning with an unknown illness. Then the doctor and the father compressed his lips and gave vent to a long intelligent whistle. "Whew!" said he.

Roger's bronzed cheeks took a deeper shade.

"You will take a message to her from me, won't you? A message of farewell?" he pleaded.

"Not I. I'm not going to be a message-carrier between any young man and young woman. I'll tell my womenkind I forbade you to come near the house, and that you're sorry to go away without bidding good-by. That's all I shall say."

"But you do not disapprove?—I see you guess why. Oh! Mr. Gibson, just speak to me one word of what must be in your heart, though you are pretending not to understand why I would give worlds to see Molly again before I go."

"My dear boy!" said Mr. Gibson, more affected than he liked to show, and laying his hand on Roger's shoulder. Then he pulled himself up, and said gravely enough,—

"Mind, Molly is not Cynthia. If she were to care for you, she is not one who could transfer her love to the next comer."

"You mean not as readily as I have done," replied Roger. "I only wish you could know what a different feeling this is to my boyish love for Cynthia."

"I wasn't thinking of you when I spoke; but, however, as I might have remembered afterwards that you were not a model of constancy, let us hear what you have to say for yourself."

"Not much. I did love Cynthia very much. Her manners and her beauty bewitched me; but her letters,—short, hurried letters,—sometimes showing that she really hadn't taken the trouble to read mine through,—I cannot tell you the pain they gave me! Twelve months' solitude, in frequent danger of one's life—face to face with death—sometimes ages a man like many years' experience. Still I longed for the time when I should see her sweet face again, and hear her speak. Then the letter at the Cape!—and still I hoped. But you know how I found her, when I went to have the interview which I trusted might end in the renewal of our relations,—engaged to Mr. Henderson. I saw her walking with him in your garden, coquetting with him about a flower, just as she used to do with me. I can see the pitying look in Molly's eyes as she watched me; I can see it now. And I could beat myself for being such a blind fool as to— What must she think of me? how she must despise me, choosing the false Duessa."

"Come, come! Cynthia isn't so bad as that. She's a very fascinating, faulty creature."

"I know! I know! I will never allow any one to say a word against her. If I called her the false Duessa it was because I wanted to express my sense of the difference between her and Molly as strongly as I could. You must allow for a lover's exaggeration. Besides, all I wanted to say was,—Do you think that Molly, after seeing and knowing that I had loved a person so inferior to herself, could ever be brought to listen to me?"

"I don't know. I can't tell. And even if I could, I would not. Only if it's any comfort to you, I may say what my experience has taught me. Women are queer, unreasoning creatures, and are just as likely as not to love a man who has been throwing away his affection."

"Thank you, sir!" said Roger, interrupting him. "I see you mean to give me encouragement. And I had resolved never to give Molly a hint of what I felt till I returned,—and then to try and win her by every means in my power. I determined not to repeat the former scene in the former place,—in your drawing-room,—however I might be tempted. And perhaps, after all, she avoided me when she was here last."

"Now, Roger, I've listened to you long enough. If you've nothing

better to do with your time than to talk about my daughter, I have. When you come back it will be time enough to enquire how far your father would approve of such an engagement."

"He himself urged it upon me the other day—but then I was in despair—I thought it was too late."

"And what means you are likely to have of maintaining a wife,—I always thought that point was passed too lightly over when you formed your hurried engagement to Cynthia. I'm not mercenary,—Molly has some money independently of me,—that she by the way knows nothing of,—not much;—and I can allow her something. But all these things must be left till your return."

"Then you sanction my attachment?"

"I don't know what you mean by sanctioning it. I can't help it. I suppose losing one's daughter is a necessary evil. Still"—seeing the disappointed expression on Roger's face—"it is but fair to you to say I'd rather give my child,—my only child, remember!—to you, than to any man in the world!"

"Thank you!" said Roger, shaking hands with Mr. Gibson, almost against the will of the latter. "And I may see her, just once, before I go?"

"Decidedly not. There I come in as doctor as well as father. No!"

"But you will take a message, at any rate?"

"To my wife and to her conjointly. I will not separate them. I will not in the slightest way be a go-between."

"Very well," said Roger. "Tell them both as strongly as you can how I regret your prohibition. I see I must submit. But if I don't come back, I'll haunt you for having been so cruel."

"Come, I like that. Give me a wise man of science in love! No one beats him in folly. Good-by."

"Good-by. You will see Molly this afternoon!"

"To be sure. And you will see your father. But I don't heave such portentous sighs at the thought."

Mr. Gibson gave Roger's message to his wife and to Molly that evening at dinner. It was but what the latter had expected, after all her father had said of the very great danger of infection; but now that her expectation came in the shape of a final decision, it took away her appetite. She submitted in silence; but her observant father noticed that after this speech of his, she only played with the food on her plate, and concealed a good deal, of it under her knife and fork.

"*Lover versus father!*" thought he, half sadly. "*Lover wins.*" And he, too, became indifferent to all that remained of his dinner. Mrs. Gibson pattered on; and nobody listened.

The day of Roger's departure came. Molly tried hard to forget it in working away at a cushion she was preparing as a present to Cynthia; people did worsted-work in those days. One, two, three. One, two, three, four, five,

six, seven ; all wrong, she was thinking of something else, and had to unpick it. It was a rainy day, too ; and Mrs. Gibson, who had planned to go out and pay some calls, had to stay indoors. This made her restless and fidgety. She kept going backwards and forwards to different windows in the drawing-room to look at the weather, as if she imagined that while it rained at one window, it might be fine weather at another. "Molly—come here ! who is that man wrapped up in a cloak,—there,—near the Park wall, under the beech-tree—he has been there this half-hour and more, never stirring, and looking at this house all the time ! I think it's very suspicious."

Molly looked, and in an instant recognized Roger under all his wraps. Her first instinct was to draw back. The next to come forwards, and say—"Why, mamma, it's Roger Hamley ! Look now—he's kissing his hand ; he's wishing us good-bye in the only way he can !" And she responded to his sign ; but she was not sure if he perceived her modest quiet movement, for Mrs. Gibson became immediately so demonstrative that Molly fancied that her eager foolish pantomimic motions must absorb all his attention.

"I call this so attentive of him," said Mrs. Gibson, in the midst of a volley of kisses of her hand. "Really it is quite romantic. It reminds me of former days—but he will be too late ! I must send him away ; it is half-past twelve !" And she took out her watch and held it up, tapping it with her fore-finger, and occupying the very centre of the window. Molly could only peep here and there, dodging now up, now down, now on this side, now on that of the perpetually-moving arms. She fancied she saw something of a corresponding movement on Roger's part. At length he went away, slowly, slowly, and often looking back, in spite of the tapped watch. Mrs. Gibson at last retreated, and Molly quietly moved into her place to see his figure once more before the turn of the road hid it from her view. He, too, knew where the last glimpse of Mr. Gibson's house was to be obtained, and once more he turned, and his white handkerchief floated in the air. Molly waved hers high up, with eager longing that it should be seen. And then, he was gone ! and Molly returned to her worsted-work, happy, glowing, sad, content, and thinking to herself how sweet is friendship !

When she came to a sense of the present, Mrs. Gibson was saying,—

"Upon my word, though Roger Hamley has never been a great favourite of mine, this little attention of his has reminded me very forcibly of a very charming young man—a *soupirant*, as the French would call him—Lieutenant Harper—you must have heard me speak of him, Molly ?"

"I think I have !" said Molly, absently.

"Well, you remember how devoted he was to me when I was at Mrs. Duncombe's, my first situation, and I only seventeen. And when the recruiting party was ordered to another town, poor Mr. Harper came and stood opposite the schoolroom window for nearly an hour, and I know it was his doing that the band played 'The girl I left behind me,' when they marched out the next day. Poor Mr. Harper ! It was before I

knew dear Mr. Kirkpatrick ! Dear me. How often my poor heart has had to bleed in this life of mine ! not but what dear papa is a very worthy man, and makes me very happy. He would spoil me, indeed, if I would let him. Still he is not as rich as Mr. Henderson,"

That last sentence contained the germ of Mrs. Gibson's present grievance. Having married Cynthia, as her mother put it—taking credit to herself as if she had had the principal part in the achievement—she now became a little envious of her daughter's good fortune in being the wife of a young, handsome, rich, and moderately fashionable man, who lived in London. She naively expressed her feelings on this subject to her husband one day when she was really not feeling quite well, and when consequently her annoyances were much more present to her mind than her sources of happiness.

"It is such a pity !" said she, "that I was born when I was. I should so have liked to belong to this generation."

"That's sometimes my own feeling," said he. "So many new views seem to be opened in science, that I should like, if it were possible, to live till their reality was ascertained, and one saw what they led to. But I don't suppose that's your reason, my dear, for wishing to be twenty or thirty years younger."

"No, indeed. And I did not put it in that hard unpleasant way ; I only said I should like to belong to this generation. To tell the truth, I was thinking of Cynthia. Without vanity, I believe I was as pretty as she is—when I was a girl, I mean ; I had not her dark eye-lashes, but then my nose was straighter. And now look at the difference ! I have to live in a little country town with three servants, and no carriage ; and she with her inferior good looks will live in Sussex Place, and keep a man and a brougham, and I don't know what. But the fact is, in this generation there are so many more rich young men than there were when I was a girl."

"Oh, oh ! so that's your reason, is it, my dear. If you had been young now you might have married somebody as well off as Walter ?"

"Yes !" said she. "I think that was my idea. Of course I should have liked him to be you. I always think if you had gone to the bar you might have succeeded better, and lived in London, too. I don't think Cynthia cares much where she lives, yet you see it has come to her."

"What has—London ?"

"Oh, you dear, facetious man. Now that's just the thing to have captivated a jury. I don't believe Walter will ever be so clever as you are. Yet he can take Cynthia to Paris, and abroad, and everywhere. I only hope all this indulgence won't develope the faults in Cynthia's character. It's a week since we heard from her, and I did write so particularly to ask her for the autumn fashions before I bought my new bonnet. But riches are a great snare."

"Be thankful you are spared temptation, my dear."

"No, I'm not. Every body likes to be tempted. And, after all, it's very easy to resist temptation, if one wishes."

"I don't find it so easy," said her husband.

"Here's medicine for you, mamma," said Molly, entering with a letter held up in her hand. "A letter from Cynthia."

"Oh, you dear little messenger of good news! There was one of the heathen deities in Mangnall's questions whose office it was to bring news. The letter is dated from Calais. They're coming home! She's bought me a shawl and a bonnet! The dear creature! Always thinking of others before herself: good fortune cannot spoil her. They've a fortnight left of their holiday! Their house is not quite ready; they're coming here. Oh, now, Mr. Gibson, we must have the new dinner service at Watts's I've set my heart on so long! 'Home' Cynthia calls this house. I'm sure it has been a home to her, poor darling! I doubt if there is another man in the world who would have treated his step-daughter like dear papa! And, Molly, you must have a new gown."

"Come, come! Remember I belong to the last generation," said Mr. Gibson.

"And Cynthia will not notice what I wear," said Molly, bright with pleasure at the thought of seeing her again.

"No! but Walter will. He has such a quick eye for dress; and I think I rival papa; if he is a good stepfather, I'm a good stepmother, and I could not bear to see my Molly shabby, and not looking her best. I must have a new gown too. It won't do to look as if we had nothing but the dresses which we wore at the wedding!"

But Molly stood against the new gown for herself, and urged that if Cynthia and Walter were to come to visit them often, they had better see them as they really were, in dress, habits, and appointments. When Mr. Gibson had left the room, Mrs. Gibson softly reproached Molly for her obstinacy.

"You might have allowed me to beg for a new gown for you, Molly, when you knew how much I admired that figured silk at Brown's the other day. And now, of course, I can't be so selfish as to get it for myself, and you to have nothing. You should learn to understand the wishes of other people. Still, on the whole, you are a dear, sweet girl, and I only wish—well, I know what I wish; only dear papa does not like it to be talked about. And now cover me up close, and let me go to sleep, and dream about my dear Cynthia and my new shawl!"

HERE the story is broken off, and it can never be finished. What promised to be the crowning work of a life is a memorial of death. A few days longer, and it would have been a triumphal column, crowned with a capital of festal leaves and flowers: now it is another sort of column—one of those sad white pillars which stand broken in the churchyard.

But if the work is not quite complete, little remains to be added to it, and that little has been distinctly reflected into our minds. We know that Roger Hamley will marry Molly, and that is what we are most concerned about. Indeed, there was little else to tell. Had the writer lived, she would have sent her hero back to Africa forthwith; and those scientific parts-of Africa are a long way from Hamley; and there is not much to choose between a long distance and a long time. How many hours are there in twenty-four when you are all alone in a desert place, a thousand miles from the happiness which might be yours to take—if you were there to take it? How many, when from the sources of the Topinambo your heart flies back ten times a day, like a carrier-pigeon, to the one only source of future good for you, and ten times a day returns with its message undelivered? Many more than are counted on the calendar. So Roger found. The days were weeks that separated him from the time when Molly gave him a certain little flower, and months from the time which divorced him from Cynthia, whom he had begun to doubt before he knew for certain that she was never much worth hoping for. And if such were his days, what was the slow procession of actual weeks and months in those remote and solitary places? They were like years of a stay-at-home life, with liberty and leisure to see that nobody was courting Molly meanwhile. The effect of this was, that long before the term of his engagement was ended all that Cynthia had been to him was departed from Roger's mind, and all that Molly was and might be to him filled it full.

He returned; but when he saw Molly again he remembered that to her the time of his absence might not have seemed so long, and was oppressed with the old dread that she would think him fickle. Therefore this young gentleman, so self-reliant and so lucid in scientific matters, found it difficult after all to tell Molly how much he hoped she loved him; and might have blundered if he had not thought of beginning by showing her the flower that was plucked from the nosegay. How charmingly that scene would have been drawn, had Mrs. Gaskell lived to depict it, we can only imagine: that it *would* have been charming—especially in what Molly did, and looked, and said—we know.

Roger and Molly are married; and if one of them is happier than the other, it is Molly. Her husband has no need to draw upon the little fortune which is to go to poor Osborne's boy, for he becomes professor at some great scientific institution, and wins his way in the world handsomely. The squire is almost as happy in this marriage as his son. If any one suffers for it, it is Mr. Gibson. But he takes a partner, so as to get a chance of running up to London to stay with Molly for a few days now and then, and "to get a little rest from Mrs. Gibson." Of what was to happen to Cynthia after her marriage the author was not heard to say much, and, indeed, it does not seem that anything needs to be added. One little anecdote, however, was told of her by Mrs. Gaskell, which is very characteristic. One day, when Cynthia and her husband were on a visit to Hamley, Mr. Henderson learned for the first time, through an innocent

casual remark of Mr. Gibson's, that the famous traveller, Roger Hamley, was known to the family. Cynthia had never happened to mention it. How well that little incident, too, would have been described !

But it is useless to speculate upon what would have been done by the delicate strong hand which can create no more Molly Gibsons—no more Roger Hamleys. We have repeated, in this brief note, all that is known of her designs for the story, which would have been completed in another chapter. There is not so much to regret, then, so far as this novel is concerned ; indeed, the regrets of those who knew her are less for the loss of the novelist than of the woman—one of the kindest and wisest of her time. But yet, for her own sake as a novelist alone, her untimely death is a matter for deep regret. It is clear in this novel of *Wives and Daughters*, in the exquisite little story that preceded it, *Cousin Phillis*, and in *Sylvia's Lovers*, that Mrs. Gaskell had within these five years started upon a new career with all the freshness of youth, and with a mind which seemed to have put off its clay and to have been born again. But that "put off its clay" must be taken in a very narrow sense. All minds are tinctured more or less with the "muddy vesture" in which they are contained ; but few minds ever showed less of base earth than Mrs. Gaskell's. It was so at all times ; but lately even the original slight tincture seemed to disappear. While you read any one of the last three books we have named, you feel yourself caught out of an abominable wicked world, crawling with selfishness and reeking with base passions, into one where there is much weakness, many mistakes, sufferings long and bitter, but where it is possible for people to live calm and wholesome lives ; and, what is more, you feel that this is at least as real a world as the other. The kindly spirit which thinks no ill looks out of her pages irradiate ; and while we read them, we breathe the purer intelligence which prefers to deal with emotions and passions which have a living root in minds within the pale of salvation, and not with those which rot without it. This spirit is more especially declared in *Cousin Phillis* and *Wives and Daughters*—their author's latest works ; they seem to show that for her the end of life was not descent amongst the clods of the valley, but ascent into the purer air of the heaven-aspiring hills.

We are saying nothing now of the merely intellectual qualities displayed in these later works. Twenty years to come, that may be thought the more important question of the two ; in the presence of her grave we cannot think so ; but it is true, all the same, that as mere works of art and observation, these later novels of Mrs. Gaskell's are among the finest of our time. There is a scene in *Cousin Phillis*—where Holman, making hay with his men, ends the day with a psalm—which is not excelled as a picture in all modern fiction ; and the same may be said of that chapter of this last story in which Roger smokes a pipe with the Squire after the quarrel with Osborne. There is little in either of these scenes, or in a score of others which succeed each other like gems in a cabinet, which the ordinary

novel-maker could "seize." There is no "material" for him in half-a-dozen farming men singing hymns in a field, or a discontented old gentleman smoking tobacco with his son. Still less could he avail himself of the miseries of a little girl sent to be happy in a fine house full of fine people; but it is just in such things as these that true genius appears brightest and most unapproachable. It is the same with the personages in Mrs. Gaskell's works. Cynthia is one of the most difficult characters which have ever been attempted in our time. Perfect art always obscures the difficulties it overcomes; and it is not till we try to follow the processes by which such a character as the Tito of *Romola* is created, for instance, that we begin to understand what a marvellous piece of work it is. To be sure, Cynthia was not so difficult, nor is it nearly so great a creation as that splendid achievement of art and thought—of the rarest art, of the profoundest thought. But she also belongs to the kind of characters which are conceived only in minds large, clear, harmonious and just, and which can be portrayed fully and without flaw only by hands obedient to the finest motions of the mind. Viewed in this light, Cynthia is a more important piece of work even than Molly, delicately as she is drawn, and true and harmonious as that picture is also. And what we have said of Cynthia may be said with equal truth of Osborne Hamley. The true delineation of a character like that is as fine a test of art as the painting of a foot or a hand, which also seems so easy, and in which perfection is most rare. In this case the work is perfect. Mrs. Gaskell has drawn a dozen characters more striking than Osborne since she wrote *Mary Barton*, but not one which shows more exquisite finish.

Another thing we may be permitted to notice, because it has a great and general significance. It may be true that this is not exactly the place for criticism, but since we are writing of Osborne Hamley, we cannot resist pointing out a peculiar instance of the subtler conceptions which underlie all really considerable works. Here are Osborne and Roger, two men who, in every particular that can be seized for description, are totally different creatures. Body and mind they are quite unlike. They have different tastes; they take different ways: they are men of two sorts which, in the society sense, never "know" each other; and yet, never did brotherly blood run more manifest than in the veins of those two. To make that manifest without allowing the effort to peep out for a single moment, would be a triumph of art; but it is a "touch beyond the reach of art" to make their likeness in unlikeness so natural a thing that we no more wonder about it than we wonder at seeing the fruit and the bloom on the same bramble: we have always seen them there together in blackberry season, and do not wonder about it nor think about it at all. Inferior writers, even some writers who are highly accounted, would have revelled in the "contrast," persuaded that they were doing a fine anatomical dramatic thing by bringing it out at every opportunity. To the author of *Wives and Daughters* this sort of anatomy

was mere dislocation. She began by having the people of her story born in the usual way, and not built up like the Frankenstein monster; and thus when Squire Hamley took a wife, it was then provided that his two boys should be as naturally one and diverse as the fruit and the bloom on the bramble. "It goes without speaking." These differences are precisely what might have been expected from the union of Squire Hamley with the town-bred, refined, delicate-minded woman whom he married; and the affection of the young men, their kind-ness (to use the word in its old and new meanings at once) is nothing but a reproduction of those impalpable threads of love which bound the equally diverse father and mother in bonds faster than the ties of blood.

But we will not permit ourselves to write any more in this vein. It is unnecessary to demonstrate to those who know what is and what is not true literature that Mrs. Gaskell was gifted with some of the choicest faculties bestowed upon mankind; that these grew into greater strength and ripened into greater beauty in the decline of her days; and that she has gifted us with some of the truest, purest works of fiction in the language. And she was herself what her works show her to have been—a wise, good woman.—[ED. C. M.]

Thoughts in Italy about Christmas.

WHAT is the meaning of our English Christmas? whence comes this rejoicing through the land? why do we feel Christmas to be different from all other seasons of the year? what makes it seem so truly Northern, national, and homely, that we cannot bear to keep the feast upon a foreign shore? These questions grew upon me as I stood one Advent afternoon beneath the Dome of Florence. A priest was thundering from the pulpit against French scepticism, and exalting the miracle of the Incarnation. Through the whole dim church blazed altar candles. Crowds of men and women knelt or sat about the arches, murmuring their prayers of preparation for the festival. At the door were pedlars, selling little books, in which were printed all the offices for Christmas-tide, with stories of St. Felix and St. Catherine, whose devotion to the infant Christ had wrought them weal, and promises of the remission of four purgatorial centuries to those who zealously observed the service of the church at this most holy time. I knew that the people of Florence were preparing for Christmas in their own way. But it was not our Christmas. It happened that outside the church the climate seemed as wintry as our own—snowstorms, and ice, and wind, and chilling fog suggesting Northern cold. But as the palaces of Florence lacked our comfortable fires, and the greetings of friends lacked our hearty handshakes and loud good wishes, so there seemed to be a want of feeling in their Christmas services and customs. Again I asked myself, "What do we mean by Christmas?"

The same thought pursued me as I drove across the hills to Rome: by Sienna, vast, and brown, and uninhabited among its earth-heaps; by Chiusi, with its city of a dead and unknown people; through the chestnut forests of the Apennines; by Orvieto's rock, Viterbo's fountains, and the oak-grown solitudes of the Ciminian heights, from which one sees the broad lake of Bolsena and the Roman plain. Brilliant sunlight, like that of a day in late September, shone upon the landscape, and I thought—Can this be Christmas? Are they bringing mistletoe and holly on the country carts into the towns in far-off England? Is it clear and frosty there, with the tramp of heels upon the flag, or snowing silently, or foggy with a round red sun, and cries of warning at the corners of the streets? I reached Rome on Christmas-eve, in time to hear midnight services in the Sistine Chapel and St. John Lateran, to breathe the dust of decayed shrines, to wonder at doting cardinals begrimed with snuff, and to resent the open-mouthed bad taste of my countrymen who made a mockery of these palsy-stricken ceremonies. Nine cardinals going to sleep, nine train-bearers talking

scandal, twenty huge, handsome Switzers in the dress devised by Michael Angelo, some ushers, a choir caged off by gilded railings, the insolence and eagerness of polyglot tourists, plenty of wax-candles dripping on people's heads, and a continual nasal drone proceeding from the gilded cage, out of which were caught at intervals these words, and these only,—“*Sæcula sæculorum, amen.*” Such were the ingredients of the celebrated Sistine service. The chapel blazed with light, and very strange did Michael Angelo's “*Last Judgment*,” Sibyls, and Prophets, appear upon the roof and wall above this motley and unmeaning crowd. Next morning I put on my dress-clothes and white tie, and repaired with multitudes of Englishmen similarly dressed, and of Englishwomen in black crape—the regulation costume—to St. Peter's. It was a glorious and cloudless morning; sunbeams streamed in columns from the southern windows, falling on the vast space full of soldiers and a mingled mass of every kind of people. Up the nave stood double files of the Pontifical guard. Monks and nuns mixed with the Swiss cuirassiers and halberds. Contadini crowded round the sacred images, and especially round the toe of St. Peter. I saw many mothers lift their swaddled babies up to kiss it. Valets of cardinals, with the invariable red umbrellas, hung about side-chapels and sacristies. Purple-mantled monsignori, like emperor butterflies, floated down the aisles from sunlight into shadow. Movement, colour, and the stir of expectation, made the church alive. We showed our raiment to the guard, were admitted within their ranks, and solemnly walked up toward the dome. There, under its broad canopy, stood the altar glittering with gold and candles. The choir was carpeted and hung with scarlet. Two magnificent thrones rose ready for the Pope: guards of honour, soldiers, attachés, and the élite of the residents and visitors in Rome, were scattered in groups picturesquely varied by ecclesiastics of all orders and degrees. At ten a stirring took place near the great west door. It opened, and we saw the procession of the Pope and his cardinals. Before him marched the singers and the blowers of the silver trumpets, making the most liquid melody. Then came his Cap of Maintenance, and three tiaras; then a company of mitred bishops; next the cardinals in scarlet; and last, aloft beneath a canopy, upon the shoulders of men, and flanked by the mystic fans, advanced the Pope himself, swaying to and fro like a Llama, or an Aztec king. Still the trumpets blew most silverly, and still the people knelt; and as he came we knelt and had his blessing. Then he took his state and received homage. After this the choir began to sing a mass of Palestrina's, and the deacons robed the Pope. Marvellous putting on and taking off of robes and tiaras and mitres ensued, during which there was much bowing and praying and burning of incense. At last when he had reached the highest stage of sacrificial sanctity, he proceeded to the altar, waited on by cardinals and bishops. Having censured it carefully, he took a higher throne and divested himself of part of his robes. Then the mass went on in earnest, till the moment of consecration, when it paused, the

Pope descended from his throne, passed down the choir, and reached the altar. Every one knelt ; the shrill bell tinkled ; the silver trumpets blew ; the air became sick and heavy with incense, so that sun and candlelight swooned in an atmosphere of odorous cloud-wreaths. The whole church trembled, hearing the strange subtle music vibrate in the dome, and seeing the Pope with his own hands lift Christ's body from the altar and present it to the people. An old parish priest, pilgrim from some valley of the Apennines, who knelt beside me, cried and quivered with excess of adoration. The great tombs around, the sculptured saints and angels, the dome, the volumes of light and incense and unfamiliar melody, the hierarchy ministrant, the white and central figure of the Pope, the multitude—made up an overpowering effect. What followed was intensely dull. My mind again went back to England, and I thought of Christmas services beginning in all village churches and all cathedrals throughout the land—their old familiar hymn, their anthem of Handel, their trite yet reverend sermons. How different the two scenes are—Christmas in Rome, Christmas in England—Italy and the North—the spirit of Latin and the spirit of Teutonic Christianity.

What, then, constitutes the essence of our Christmas as different from that of more Southern nations? In their origin they are the same. The stable of Bethlehem, the star-led kings, the shepherds, and the angels—all the beautiful story, in fact, which St. Luke alone of the Evangelists has preserved for us—are what the whole Christian world owes to the religious feeling of the Hebrews. The first and second chapters of St. Luke are most important in the history of Christian mythology and art. They are far from containing the whole of what we mean by Christmas ; but the religious poetry which gathers round that season must be sought upon their pages. Angels, ever since the captivity, had continued to play a most important part in the visions of the Hebrew prophets, and in the lives of their great men. We know not what reminiscences of old Egyptian deities, what strange shadows of the winged beasts of Persia, flitted through their dreams. In the desert, or under the boundless sky of Babylon, these shapes became as distinct as the precise outlines of Oriental scenery. They incarnated the vivid thoughts and intense longings of the prophets, who gradually came to give them human forms and titles. We hear of them by name, as servants and attendants upon God, as guardians of nations, and patrons of great men. To the Hebrew mind the whole unseen world was full of spirits, active, strong, and swift of flight, of various aspect, and with power of speech. It is hard to imagine what the Jewish disciples and the early Greek and Roman converts thought of these great beings. To us, the hierarchies of Dionysius, the dogmas of the Church, the poetry of Dante and Milton, and the forms of art, have made them quite familiar. Northern nations have appropriated the Angels, and invested them with attributes alien to their Oriental origin. They fly through our pine-forests, and the gloom of cloud or storm ; they ride upon our clanging bells, and gather in swift squadrons among the arches of

Gothic cathedrals ; we see them making light in the cavernous depth of woods, where sun or moon-beams never come, and ministering to the wounded or the weary ; they bear aloft the censers of the mass ; they sing in the anthems of choristers, and live in strains of poetry and music ; our churches bear their names ; we call our children by their titles ; we love them as our guardians, and the whole unseen world is made a home to us by their imagined presence. All these things are the growth of time and the work of races whose artistic imagination is more powerful than that of the Hebrews. Yet this rich legacy of romance is bound up in the second chapter of St. Luke ; and it is to him we must give thanks when at Christmas-tide we read of the shepherds and the angels in English words more beautiful than his own Greek.

The angels in the stable of Bethlehem, the kings who came from the far East, and the adoring shepherds, are the gift of Hebrew legend, and of the Greek physician, Luke, to Christmas. How these strange and gorgeous incidents affect modern fancy, remains for us to examine ; at present we must ask, what did the Romans give to Christmas ? The customs of the Christian religion, like everything that belongs to the modern world, have nothing pure and simple in their nature. They are the growth of long ages, and of widely different systems, parts of which have been fused into one living whole. In this respect they resemble our language, our blood, our literature, and our modes of thought and feeling. We find Christianity in one sense wholly original ; in another sense, wholly composed of old materials ; in both senses, universal and cosmopolitan. The Roman element in Christmas is a remarkable instance of this acquisitive power of Christianity. The celebration of the festival takes place at the same time as that of the pagan saturnalia ; and from the old customs of that holiday, Christmas absorbed much that was consistent with the spirit of the new religion. Every one knows that during the saturnalia the whole world enjoyed, in thought at least, a perfect freedom. Men who had gone to bed as slaves, rose their own masters. From the *ergastula* and dismal sunless cages they went forth to ramble in the streets and fields. Liberty of speech was given them, and they might satirise those vices of their lords, to which on other days they had to minister. Rome on this day, by a strange want of logic, which we might almost call a prompting of blind conscience, negatived the philosophic dictum that barbarians were by law of nature slaves, and acknowledged the higher principle of absolute equality. The saturnalia stood out from the whole year as a protest in favour of universal brotherhood, and the right that all men share alike to enjoy life after their own fashion, within the bounds that nature has assigned them. We do not know how far the Stoic school, which was so strong in Rome, and had so many points of contact with the Christians, had connected its own theories of equality with this old custom of the saturnalia. But it is certain that the fellowship of human beings, and the free abandonment of class prerogatives, became a part of Christmas through the habit of the saturnalia. We are practising a Roman

virtue to this day when at Christmas-time our hand is liberal, and we think it wrong that the poorest wretch should fail to feel the pleasure of the day.

Of course Christianity inspired the freedom of the saturnalia with a higher meaning. The mystery of the Incarnation, or the deification of human nature, put an end to slavery through all the year, as well as on this single day. What had been a kind of aimless licence became the most ennobling principle by which men are exalted to a state of self-respect and mutual reverence. But in the saturnalia was found, ready-made, an easy symbol of unselfish enjoyment. The peculiar free-hearted sympathy we practise on that day may be traced without exaggeration in the Roman festival.

The early Roman Christians probably kept Christmas with no special ceremonies. Christ was as yet too close to them. He had not become the glorious creature of their fancy, but was partly an historic being, partly confused in their imagination with reminiscences of pagan deities. As the Good Shepherd, and as Orpheus, we find him painted in the catacombs; and those who thought of Him as God, loved to dwell upon His risen greatness more than on the idyll of His birth. To them His entry upon earth seemed less a subject of rejoicing than His opening of the heavens; they suffered, and looked forward to a future happiness; they would not seem to make this world permanent by sharing its gladness with the heathens. Theirs in truth was a religion of hope and patience, not of triumphant recollection or of present joyfulness.

The Northern converts of the early church added more to the peculiar character of our Christmas. Who can tell what pagan rites were half sanctified by their association with that season, or how much of our cheerfulness belonged to heathen orgies, and the banquets of grim warlike gods? Certainly nothing strikes one more in reading Scandinavian poetry, than the odd mixture of pagan and Christian sentiments which it presents. For though the missionaries of the Church did all they could to wean away the minds of men from their old superstitions; yet, wiser than their modern followers, they saw that some things might remain untouched, and that even the great outlines of the Christian faith might be adapted to the habits of the people whom they studied to convert. Thus, on the one hand, they destroyed the old temples one by one, and called the idols by the name of devils, and strove to obliterate the songs which sang great deeds of bloody gods and heroes, while, on the other, they taught the Northern sea-kings that Jesus was a Prince surrounded by twelve dukes, who conquered all the world. Besides, they left the days of the week to their old patrons. Of course the imagination of the people preserved more of heathendom than even such missionaries could approve, mixing up the deeds of the Christian saints with old heroic legends, seeing Balder's beauty in Christ, and the strength of Thor in Sampson; attributing magic to St. John, swearing, as of old, bloody oaths in God's name, over the gilded boar's-head, burning the yule-log, and cutting sacred boughs to grace their new-built churches. The songs of

choirs and sound of holy bells, and superstitious reverence for the mass, began to tell upon the people; and soon the echo of their old religion only swelled upon the ear at intervals, attaching itself to times of more than usual sanctity. Christmas was one of these times, and the old faith threw around its celebration a fantastic light. Many customs of the genial pagan life remained; they seemed harmless when the sense of joy was Christian. The Druid's mistletoe graced the church porches of England and of France, and no blood lingered on its berries. Christmas thus became a time of extraordinary mystery. The people loved it as connecting their old life with the new religion, perhaps unconsciously, though every one might feel that Christmas was no common Christian feast. On its eve, strange wonders happened: the thorn that sprang at Glastonbury from the sacred crown which Joseph brought with him from Palestine, when Avalon was still an island, blossomed on that day. The Cornish miners seemed to hear the sound of singing men arise from submerged churches by the shore, and others said that bells, beneath the ground where villages had been, chimed yearly on that eve. No evil thing had power, as Marcellus in *Hamlet* tells us, and the bird of dawning crowed the whole night through. One might multiply folk-lore about the sanctity of Christmas, but enough has been said to show that round it lingered long the legendary spirit of old paganism. It is not to Jews, or Greeks, or Romans that we owe our ancient Christmas fancies, but to those half-heathen ancestors who lovingly looked back to Odin's days, and held the old while they embraced the new.

Let us imagine Christmas Day in a mediæval town of Northern England. The cathedral has been partly built. Its nave and transepts are the work of Norman architects, but the choir remains for more graceful designers and more skilful hands. The old city is full of craftsmen assembled to complete the church. Some have come as a religious duty, to work off their tale of sins by bodily labour. Some are animated by a love of art—simple men, who might have rivalled with the Greeks in ages of more cultivation. Others, again, are well-known carvers, brought for hire from distant towns and countries beyond the sea. But to-day, and for some days past, the sound of hammer and chisel has been silent in the choir. Monks have bustled about the nave, dressing it up with holly-boughs and bushes of yew, and preparing a stage for the sacred play they are going to exhibit on the feast day. Christmas is not like Corpus Christi, and now the market-place stands inches deep in snow, so that the miracles must be enacted beneath a roof instead of in the open air. And what place so appropriate as the cathedral, where poor people may have warmth and shelter whilst they see the show? Besides, the gloomy old church, with its windows darkened by the falling snow, lends itself to candle-light effects that will enhance the splendour of the scene. Everything is ready. The incense of morning mass yet lingers round the altar. The voice of the friar who told the people from the pulpit the story of Christ's birth, has hardly ceased to echo. Time has just been given for a mid-day dinner, and for the shepherds and farm lads to troop

in from the country-side. The monks are ready at the wooden stage to draw its curtain, and all the nave is full of eager faces. There you may see the smith and carpenter, the butcher's wife, the country priest, and the brown Franciscan monk. Hundreds of workmen, whose home the cathedral for the time is made, are also here, and you may know the artists by their thoughtful foreheads and keen eyes. That young monk carved Madonna and her Son above the southern porch. Beside him stands the master mason, whose strong arms have hewn gigantic images of prophets and apostles for the pinnacles outside the choir; and the little man with cunning eyes between the two is he who cuts such quaint hobgoblins for the gargoyles. He has a vein of satire in him, and his humour overflows into the stone. Many and many a grim beast and hideous head has he hidden among vine leaves and trellis work upon the porches. Those who know him well are loth to anger him, for fear their sons and sons' sons should laugh at them for ever caricatured in solid stone. Hark! there sounds the bell. The curtain is drawn, and the candles blaze brightly round the wooden stage. What is this first scene? We have God in Heaven, dressed like a Pope with triple crown, and attended by his court of angels. They sing and toss up censers till he lifts his hand and speaks.

In a long Latin speech, he unfolds the order of creation, and his will concerning man. At the end of it, up leaps an ugly buffoon, in goat-skin, with rams' horns upon his head. Some children begin to cry, but the older people laugh, for this is the devil, the clown and comic character, who talks their common tongue, and has no reverence before the very throne of Heaven. He asks leave to plague men, and receives it; then, with many a curious caper, he goes down to Hell beneath the stage. The angels sing and toss their censers as before, and the first scene closes to a sound of organs. The next is dull; it represents the Fall, the monks hurry over it quickly, as a tedious but necessary prelude to the birth of Christ. That is the true Christmas part of the ceremony, and it is understood that the best actors and most beautiful dresses are to be reserved for it. The builders of the choir in particular, are interested in the coming scenes, since one of their number has been chosen for his handsome face and tenor voice, to sing the angel's part.

He is a young fellow of nineteen, but his beard is not yet grown, and long hair hangs down upon his shoulders. A chorister of the cathedral, his younger brother will act the Virgin Mary. At last the curtain is drawn.

We see a cottage-room, dimly lighted by a lamp, and Mary spinning near her bedside. She sings a country air, and goes on working, till a rustling noise is heard, more light is thrown upon the stage, and a glorious creature, in white raiment, with broad golden wings, appears. He bears a lily, and cries:—"Ave Maria, Gratia Plena!" She does not answer, but stands confused, with down-dropped eyes and timid mien. Gabriel rises from the ground and comforts her, and sings aloud his message of glad tidings. Then Mary gathers courage, and kneeling in her turn, thanks God; and when the angel and his radiance disappears, she sings

the song of the Magnificat, clearly and simply in the darkened room. Very soft and silver sounds this hymn through the great church. The women kneel, and children are hushed as by a lullaby. But some of the hinds and prentice-lads begin to think it rather dull. They are not sorry when the next scene opens with a sheep-fold and a little camp-fire. Unmistakable bleatings issue from the fold, and five or six common fellows are sitting round the blazing wood. One might fancy they had stepped straight from the church floor to the stage, so natural do they look. Besides, they call themselves by common names—Colin and Tom Lie-a-bed, and nimble Dick. Many a round laugh wakes echoes in the church, when these shepherds get up, and hold debate about a stolen sheep. Tom Lie-a-bed has nothing to remark but that he is very sleepy, and does not want to go in search of it to-night; Colin cuts jokes, and throws out shrewd suspicions that Dick knows something of the matter; but Dick is sly, and keeps them off the scent, although a few of his asides reveal to the audience that he is the real thief. While they are thus talking, silence falls upon the shepherds. Soft music from the church organ breathes, and they appear to fall asleep.

The stage is now quite dark, and for a few moments the aisles echo only to the dying melody. When behold, a ray of light is seen, and splendour grows around the stage from unseen candles, and in the glory Gabriel appears upon a higher platform made to look like clouds. The shepherds wake in confusion, striving to shelter their eyes from this unwonted brilliancy. But Gabriel waves his lily, spreads his great gold wings, and bids good cheer with clarion voice. The shepherds fall to worship, and suddenly round Gabriel there gathers a choir of angels, and a song of "Gloria in Excelsis" to the sound of a deep organ is heard far off. From distant aisles it swells, and seems to come from heaven. Through a long resonant fugue the glory flies, and as it ceases with complex conclusion, the lights die out, the angels disappear, and Gabriel fades into the darkness. Still the shepherds kneel, rustically chanting a carol half in Latin, half in English, which begins "In dulci Jubilo." The people know it well, and when the chorus rises with "Ubi sunt gaudia?" its wild melody is caught by voices up and down the nave. This scene makes deep impression upon many hearts; for the beauty of Gabriel is rare, and few who see him in his angel's dress, would know him for the lad who daily carves his lilies and broad water flags about the pillars of the choir. To that simple audience he interprets heaven, and little children will see him in their dreams. Dark winter nights and awful forests will be trodden by his feet, made musical by his melodious voice, and parted by the rustling of his wings. The youth himself may return to-morrow to the workman's blouse and chisel, but his memory lives in many minds and may form a part of Christmas to the fancy of men as yet unborn. The next drawing of the curtain shows us the stable of Bethlehem crowned by its star. There kneels Mary, and Joseph leans upon his staff. The ox and ass are close at

hand, and Jesus lies in jewelled robes on straw within the manger. To right and left bow the shepherds worshipping in dumb show, while voices from behind chant a solemn hymn. In the midst of the melody is heard a flourish of trumpets, and heralds step upon the stage, followed by the three crowned kings. They have come from the far East, led by the star. The song ceases, while drums and fifes and trumpets play a stately march. The kings pass by, and do obeisance one by one. Each gives some costly gift; each doffs his crown and leaves it at the Saviour's feet. Then they retire to a distance and worship in silence like the shepherds. Again the angel's song is heard, and while it dies away, the curtain closes, and the lights are put out.

The play is over, and evening has come. The people must go from the warm church into the frozen snow, and crunch their homeward way beneath the moon. But in their minds they carry a sense of light and music and unearthly loveliness. Not a scene of this day's pageant will be lost. It grows within them and creates the poetry of Christmas. Nor must we forget the sculptors who listen to the play. We spoke of them minutely, because these mysteries sank deep into their souls and found a way into their carvings on the cathedral walls. The monk who made Madonna by the southern porch will remember Gabriel, and place him bending low in lordly salutation by her side. The painted glass of the chapter house will glow with fiery choirs of angels learned by heart that night. And who does not know the mocking devils and quaint satyrs that the humorous sculptor will carve among his fruits and flowers? Some of the misereres of the stalls still bear portraits of the shepherd thief, and of the ox and ass who blinked so blindly when the kings by torchlight brought their dazzling gifts. Truly these old miracle-plays and the carved work of cunning hands that they inspired are worth to us more than all the delicate creations of Italian pencils. Our homely Northern churches still retain for the child who reads their bosses and their sculptured fronts more Christmas poetry than we can find in Fra Angelico's devoutness, or the liveliness of Giotto. Not that Southern artists have done nothing for our Christmas. Cimabue's gigantic angels at Assisi, and the radiant seraphs of Raphael or of Signorelli, were seen by Milton in his Italian journey. He gazed in Roman churches on graceful nativities, into which Angelico and Credi threw their simple souls. How much they tinged his fancy we cannot say. But what we know of heavenly hierarchies we later men have learned from Milton; and what he saw he spoke, and what he spoke in sounding verse lives for us now and sways our reason, and controls our fancy, and makes an art of high theology.

Thus have we attempted rudely to recall a scene of mediæval Christmas. To understand the domestic habits of that age is not so easy, though one can fancy how the barons in their halls held Christmas with the boar's head and the jester and the great yule-log. On the days set lord and lady, waited on by knight and squire and page; but down the

long hall feasted yeomen and hinds and men-at-arms. Little remains to us of those days, and we have outworn their jollity. It is really from the Elizabethan poets that our sense of old-fashioned festivity arises. They lived at the end of one age and the beginning of another. Though born to inaugurate the new era, they belonged by right of association and sympathy to the period that was fleeting fast away. This enabled them to represent the poetry of past and present. Old customs and old states of feeling, when they are about to perish, pass into the realm of art. For art is like a flower, which consummates the plant and ends its growth, while it translates its nature into loveliness. Thus Dante and Orcagna enshrined mediæval theology in works of imperishable beauty, and Shakspeare and his fellows made immortal the life and manners that were decaying in their own time. Men do not reflect upon their mode of living till they are passing from one state to another, and the consciousness of art implies a beginning of new things. Let one who wishes to appreciate the ideal of an English Christmas read Shakspeare's song, "Where icicles hang by the wall;" and if he knows some old grey grange, far from the high road, among pastures, with a river flowing near, and cawing rooks in elm trees by the garden-wall, let him place Dick and Joan and Marian there. We have heard so much of pensioners, and barons of beef, and yule-logs, and bay, and rosemary, and holly-boughs cut upon the hill-side, and crab-apples bobbing in the wassail bowl, and masques and mummers, and dancers on the rushes, that we need not here describe a Christmas-eve in olden times. But one characteristic of the age of Elizabeth may be mentioned: that is, its love of music. Fugued melodies sung by voices without instruments were much in vogue. We call them madrigals, and their half-merry, half-melancholy music, yet recalls the time when England had her gift of art, when she needed not to borrow of Marenzio and Palestrina, when her Wilbyes and her Morlands and her Dowlands won the praise of Shakspeare and the court. We hear the echo of those songs, and in some towns at Christmas or the New Year old madrigals still sound in praise of Oriana and of Phyllis and the country life. What are called waits are but a poor travesty of those well-sung Elizabethan carols. We turn in our beds half-pitying, half-angered, by harsh voices that quaver senseless ditties in the fog, or tuneless fiddles playing popular airs without propriety or interest. It is a strange mixture of incongruous elements which the Elizabethan age presents. We see it afar off, like the meeting of a hundred streams that grow into a river. We are sailing on the flood long after it has shrunk into a single tide, and the banks are dull and tame, and the all-absorbing ocean is before us. Yet sometimes we hear a murmur of the distant fountains, and Christmas is a day on which the many waters of the age of great Elizabeth sound clearest.

The age which followed was not poetical. The Puritans restrained festivity and art, and hated music. Yet from this period stands out the hymn of Milton, written when he was a youth, but bearing promise of his

later muse. At one time, as we read it, we seem to be looking on a picture by some old Italian artist. But no picture can give Milton's music or make the "base of heaven's deep organ blow." Here he touches new associations, and reveals the realm of poetry which it remained for later times to traverse. Milton felt the true sentiment of Northern Christmas when he opened his poem with the "winter wild," in defiance of historical probability, and what the French call "local colouring." Nothing shows how wholly we people of the North have appropriated Christmas, and made it a creature of our own imagination, more than this dwelling on winds and snows, and bitter frosts, so alien from the fragrant nights of Palestine. But Milton's hymn is like a symphony, embracing many thoughts and periods of varying melody. The music of the seraphim brings to his mind the age of gold, and that suggests the judgment and the redemption of the world. Satan's kingdom falls, the false gods go forth, Apollo leaves his rocky throne, and all the dim Phœnician and Egyptian deities, with those that classic fancy fabled, troop away like ghosts into the darkness. What a swell of stormy sound is in those lines! It reminds us of the voice of Pan, which went abroad upon the waters when Christ died, and all the utterances of God on earth, feigned in Delphian shrines, or truly spoken on the sacred hills, were mute for ever.

After Milton came the age which, of all others, is the proudest in our history. We cannot find much novelty of interest added to Christmas at this time. But there is one piece of poetry that somehow or another seems to belong to the reign of Anne and of the Georges,—the poetry of bells. Great civic corporations reigned in those days, churchwardens tyrannized and were rich, and many a goodly chime of bells they hung in old church-steeple. Let us go into the square room of the belfry, where the clock ticks all day, and the long ropes hang dangling down with fur upon their hemp for ringer's hands, above the socket set for ringers' feet. There we may read long lists of gilded names, recording mountainous bob-majors, rung a century ago, with special praise to him who pulled the tenor-bell, year after year, until he died, and left it to his son. The art of bell-ringing is profound, and requires a long apprenticeship. Even now, in some old cities, the ringers form a guild and mystery. Suppose it to be Christmas-eve, in the year 1772. It is now a quarter before twelve, and the sexton has unlocked the church-gates, and set the belfry door ajar. Candles are lighted in the room above, and jugs of beer stand ready for the ringers. Up they bustle one by one, and listen to the tickings of the clock that tell the passing minutes. At last it gives a click; and now they throw off coat and waistcoat, strap their girdles tighter round the waist, and each holds his rope in readiness. Twelve o'clock strikes, and forth across the silent city go the clamorous chimes. The steeple rocks and reels, and far away the night is startled. Damp turbulent West winds, rushing from the distant sea, and swirling up the inland valleys, catch the sound, and toss it to and fro, and bear it by gusts and snatches to watchers far away, upon bleak moorlands and the

brows of woody hills. Is there not something dim and strange in the thought of these eight men meeting in the heart of a great city in the narrow belfry-room, to stir a mighty sound that shall announce to listening ears miles, miles away, the birth of a new day, and tell to dancers, mourners, students, sleepers, and perhaps to dying men, that Christ is born?

Let this association suffice for the time. And of our own Christmas so much has been said and sung by better voices, that we may leave it to the feelings and the memories of those who read the fireside tales of Dickens, and are happy in their homes. The many elements which we have endeavoured to recall, mix all of them in the Christmas of the present, partly, no doubt, under the form of vague and obscure sentiment, partly as time-honoured reminiscences, partly as a portion of our own life. But there is one view of poetry which we enjoy more fully than any previous age. That is music. Music is of all the arts the youngest, and of all can free herself most readily from symbols. A fine piece of music moves before us like a living passion, which needs no form or colour, no interpreting associations, to convey its strong but indistinct significance. Each man there finds his soul revealed to him, and enabled to assume a cast of feeling in obedience to the changeful sound. In this manner all our Christmas thoughts and emotions have been gathered up for us by Handel in his drama of the *Messiah*. To Englishmen it is almost as well known and necessary as the Bible. But only one who has heard its pastoral episode performed year after year from childhood in the hushed cathedral, where pendant lamps or sconces make the gloom of aisle and choir and airy column half intelligible, can invest this music with long associations of accumulated awe. To his mind it brings a scene at midnight of hills, clear in the starlight of the East, with white flocks scattered on the down. The breath of winds that come and go, the bleating of the sheep, with now and then a tinkling bell, and now and then the voice of an awakened shepherd, is all that breaks the deep repose. Overhead shimmer the bright stars, and low to West lies the moon, not pale and sickly (he dreams) as in our North, but golden, full, and bathing distant towers and tall aerial palms with floods of light. Such is a child's vision, begotten by the music of the symphony, and when he wakes from trance at its low silver close, the dark cathedral seems glowing with a thousand angel faces, and all the air is tremulous with angel wings. Then follow the solitary treble voice and the swift chorus.

Here let me close my Christmas reveries. I have tried to set down some of the various elements which age after age has added to make up our Northern festival. An Italian or a Spaniard, looking backward up the river of Time, would see other landmarks; but all who call themselves by the great Christian name would find the fountain of their feeling in the event which binds Christendom into unity, and makes the world one brotherhood.

American Humour.

THE close blood-relationship which exists between ourselves and the American people has produced a curious play of inconsistent sentiment. Before the late war there was a tendency amongst many, and especially amongst the most educated Americans, to take such pride in their connection with the mother-country as was consistent with a strong sense of their own superior merits. Still when a man has never had a chance of quarrelling except with his brother, the resulting family feud is apt to be bitter ; and when his only foundation for boasting has been derived from thrashing the same brother, the feud is likely to be long remembered. We need not inquire how far the feelings entertained towards us have been modified by certain late disputes. For the present there is undoubtedly a soreness which gives the repulsive forces at least a momentary superiority to the attractive. Americans are more apt to boast of their having developed a distinct national character than of forming a branch of the "Anglo-Saxon" race. And putting aside the animosity which such a sentiment may cover, we cannot doubt that it expresses on the whole a wiser and manlier view. When a nation is passing out of the hobbledehoy stage, it should become independent in thought as well as in political arrangements. Moreover, although the nucleus upon which the American nation was formed was of genuine English stuff, an immense quantity of foreign material has gathered round it, which will materially modify its ultimate composition. Germans and Irish have poured in by the hundred thousand. New York is said to include the third German city population in the world ; and must contain more Irishmen than any place after Dublin. In the far West there are villages where, to judge from the language, the traveller might fancy himself on the banks of the Rhine or the Danube ; and there are many towns where the German element seems to dispute the predominance of the American. The curious thing is, indeed, not that the population should have so heterogeneous an appearance, but that it should tend so rapidly to conform to the well-known American type. A generation or two, at most, seems to suffice to stretch the fat placid German and to sober the excitable Irishman into the lean, eager, and self-restrained Yankee ; and to initiate the new comers into all the mysteries of caucuses, platforms, newspapers, free-schools, and the whole machinery of American social life. Distinct, however, as the American breed has become, the country is still in some respects a province of England. We cannot speak here of similarity in laws, religion, politics, and a few other trifles. But the identity of language is itself one great bond of union. England and America are

divided for many purposes by lines of demarcation as broad and as deep as the Atlantic; but in a literary point of view they are absolutely continuous. The United States take their literature from us as unreservedly as we used to take our cotton from them, and (for the parallel is unluckily not quite complete) without paying for it. They are in this respect our subjects as much as when they were our colonies. The intellectual empire of Mr. Mill, or Mr. Carlyle, or Mr. Tennyson, extends over Massachusetts as distinctly as over Middlesex. Travelling on an American railroad, you have one advantage to compensate for a slow rate of progress combined with increased danger to your neck: newsboys circulate through the train, bringing trays full of books. You find amongst them George Eliot's last work, or the last thing in sensation novels as certainly as you would on one of Messrs. Smith and Son's book-stalls. New York is not more dependent upon Paris for fashions than it is upon England for books. The newspapers that rail against us fill their columns from our magazines. Enterprising firms republish everything of value as soon as it appears in England. Americans indeed boast that they have discovered the merits of some of our authors before we had recognized them ourselves. Collected editions of the writings of Macaulay, of Præd, and of other authors, were first brought out in America; and educated Americans are to the full as familiar with our writers as we can be ourselves. We have, it is true, received a certain quantity of exchange in kind; but up to the present time this has formed but an inconsiderable set-off. The mediocrity which is sometimes attributed to democratic institutions, but which may more reasonably be put down to the exceptional social condition of a young country, is as marked in literature as in other departments of life. It remains to be seen whether the convulsion which has stirred the country to its foundations, may produce such an outburst of literary energy in America, as our own great struggle appears to have produced in England at the beginning of the century. For the present, however, there are no indications of any writer fitted to take his place amongst the intellectual leaders of the world in science, philosophy, or poetry. Theodore Parker, Emerson, Hawthorne, Longfellow, and several other names of various merit might be mentioned; but, although men of ability, none of them can be said to have passed out of the second rank. They have not struck out any new paths of thought; they have been imitators rather than leaders; they have all shown a certain incompleteness indicating an insufficient mastery of their subjects—it almost seems as if in a young country grown-up men had immature minds—and their efforts remind us rather of extremely clever essays by undergraduates, than of the thorough and finished work of well-trained thinkers. "The United States," as one of their most original writers says, "furnish the greatest market for intellectual green fruit of all places in the world. The demand for intellectual labour is so enormous, and the market so far from nice, that young talent is apt to fare like unripe gooseberries—get plucked to make a fool of.

Think of a country which buys 80,000 copies of the 'Proverbial Philosophy,' while the author's admiring countrymen have been buying 12,000 ! How can one let his fruit hang in the sun until it gets fully ripe, while there are 80,000 such hungry mouths ready to swallow it and proclaim its praises ? Consequently, there never was such a collection of crude pippins and half-grown windfalls as our native literature displays among its fruits."

There are not wanting certain symptoms of better things. Without touching upon any other subject, we propose to notice one distinctly original product of the American mind. We shall better estimate its value hereafter. At present, however, we may assume that American humour has a flavour peculiar to itself. It smells of the soil. It is an indigenous home growth. Like the native wines of a country, it has an aroma of its own, and is not made up to imitate the Champagnes or Burgundies of a different climate. And if its qualities have not yet been fully developed, there is hope that with careful cultivation, it may be brought to future excellence. It is perhaps natural that this particular literary product should be the first to show the capacities of the country. Here is some reason for the analogy often drawn between the youth of a people and the youth of an individual ; and a young man often shows an admirable humour before he has developed corresponding faculties in other directions. To take one striking example—Mr. Dickens displayed all the peculiar characteristics of his humour, if, indeed, he did not give the most perfect example of it, in *Pickwick*, almost his first publication, and written at a very early age. No man can have the stock of thought which is necessary for philosophical or scientific excellence, nor even the stock of experience and observation of life which is necessary for a really great novelist, until he has grown out of his first youth. He can scarcely, in spite of some remarkable examples to the contrary, have enriched his imagination sufficiently to be a great poet. But it is certainly possible for him to show his sense of humour. To account for this, it would be necessary, if it were desirable, to explain what we mean by humour—a task which we may at once decline as hopelessly impracticable. The profound psychologists and critics who have tried their hands at a definition, have signally broken down. We know, indeed, that, unless our national boast is ill-founded (a supposition not to be entertained for a moment), humour is something for which Englishmen are pre-eminently distinguished, and in which Frenchmen are so deficient that they have even to borrow our name for it. Rabelais and Molière and Voltaire and one or two other writers have certainly some faculty which, to the naked eye, strongly resembles it ; but when we look at them through a good pair of English glasses, we see that it isn't the genuine article. As for Germans, it need not be said that they are about as sensitive to humour as so many apple dumplings. The surgical operation which, as sanguine enthusiasts have supposed, might get a joke into the head of a Scotchman, would be thrown away upon a German. Sauerkrant, or Bavarian beer, or home-grown tobacco, seem to act as effectual prophylactics. Trying a joke

upon a genuine German is like tickling a rhinoceros with a straw, or rather like digging Mr. Wardell's fat boy in the ribs; you may possibly send a ripple over his surface, but you don't penetrate the outside layer. They are, it is true, an amusable people, as is sufficiently demonstrated by their taking pleasure in that dreariest of comic periodicals, *Kladderadatsch*—a performance which is to *Charivari* what Bavarian beer is to champagne. A Frenchman, though exquisitely witty, does not often show that tenderness of feeling which, combined with wit (if we may make a dogmatic assertion about two unknown things), favours the development of humour. A German has tenderness enough and to spare, but is apt to be deficient in the quick play of intellect which produces wit. Our best English humourists have presented the happy combination where the feelings are at the right distance from the intellect, so that the sparks struck out by wit fall instantly upon our sentiment. Or, perhaps, a Frenchman passes too quickly over the associated ideas to get the full meaning out of them; and a German dwells upon them too long and too heavily. Whatever the philosophy of wit and humour may be, they depend to some extent upon detecting resemblances and contrasts which lie upon the surface and will not bear a laborious examination. Everybody feels that Sydney Smith made an exquisitely humorous remark, when he said that it was so hot that he could take off his flesh and sit in his bones; and that Charles Lamb was more profoundly humorous in the "Dissertation upon Roast-Pig." To take, for example, one sentence: "See him" (the sucking pig) "in the dish, his second cradle, how meek he lieth! Would'st thou have this innocent grow up to the grossness and indocility which too often accompany maturer swinehood?" The touch about the second cradle is inimitable; but if a prosaic monster should insist upon analysing the expressions—upon determining the degree of resemblance between a pig's dish and his cradle, or upon determining the exact meaning to be attributed to Sydney Smith's metaphor of sitting in your bones, the whole beauty of the comparisons would evaporate. You might as well try to analyse the flavour of roast-pig by dissecting him with a carving-knife.

This power of catching superficial resemblances by a mysterious intellectual instinct is as likely (as we have before remarked) to exist in a young man as in an old one. It is even more likely to be found where the perceptive faculties are still fresh and vigorous, before we have settled down into a prosaic way of looking at things; before our minds have stiffened and our intellectual epidermis become thickened by the wear and tear of life. It is true that those happily constituted men, who retain their impressibility, will acquire a richer humour as their minds become stored by new ideas. The humour of Hamlet or of Jacques would be inconceivable in a very young man. But the peculiar cast of humour by which any man will be hereafter distinguished is generally displayed as conspicuously in his youth as at a later period.

It is a very difficult task to find the epithet which ought to make

the peculiarities of American humour intelligible to those who do not already understand all that can be said to them. No one can put into words the difference between the scent of a rose and a wallflower. A single experiment will do more than any quantity of explanation. And, therefore, when we attempt to seize some of the main characteristics of American humour, we are only trying by very ineffectual means to teach what any one may learn far better from five minutes' study of the *Biglow Papers*. A whole stream of American humour has lately been turned upon us. *Artemus Ward*, the *Orpheus C. Kerr Papers*, the *Letters of Major Downing*, and various other facetious performances, have made their appearance on this side of the Atlantic. As a rule, nothing is more difficult than for one nation to laugh at the jokes which amuse another. A great philosopher used to laugh till the tears ran down his cheeks at the sight of two spiders fighting; our inability to perceive the joke may, possibly, be a proof of our dulness, not of his childishness. Englishmen and Yankees are, however, so far of one family as to appreciate each other's humour. Some of the papers we have mentioned contain very small jokes; but English railway travellers certainly buy them and chuckle over them. Their humour only differs from ours as another species of the same genus. And therefore we may appreciate it sufficiently to see how this variety is connected with certain other national peculiarities. It is not so unlike as to be placed outside our sphere of criticism, and yet it is unlike enough to suggest the necessity of some explanation.

There is a contrast between different American writers which often strikes us. The United States are, as we know, the land which is or ought to be bounded on the East by the Atlantic Ocean, on the West by the setting sun, on the North by the aurora borealis, and on the South by the Day of Judgment. The language of their orators not unfrequently corresponds to the magnitude of the national idea. There have been many successors to the inimitable Elijah Pogram. His well-known bursts of eloquence are, like many of Mr. Dickens's imitations, a good deal more lively than reality, but they strike the true note. The subject of his eloquence was "verdant as are the mountains of our country, bright and flowing as are our mineral ticks, unspiled by withering conventionalities as are our broad and boundless prearers. Rough he may be, so air our bars; wild he may be, so air our buffalors; but he is the child of natur' and the child of freedom, and his boastful answer to the despot and the tyrant is, that his bright home is in the settin' sun."

We could quote nothing from the originals so good as the imitation. It is a kind of portable soup, an ounce of which diluted with water would produce a gallon of Fourth of July oration. The originals generally make their "tall talk" dull as well as bombastic. The contrast of which we have spoken is that between the manufacturers and the consumers of this eloquence. The genuine Yankee is the incarnation of shrewd common sense. It seems strange that he should be taken in by this "wind bag"

style of oratory. One would as soon expect a flat-fish to rise at a salmon fly. He has such a keen eye for a fact, that one would expect him to detect mere flummery. The explanation is, perhaps, simple. Every half educated person first tries to be eloquent by piling up big words, and to be forcible by employing strong ones. He has read enough to understand sesquipedalian expressions, and his taste is not polished enough to see through them. We see something of the same kind whenever an English penny-a-liner tries to be impressive. But it is also characteristic of the Americans that this bombast not only exists side by side with a peculiarly dry humour, but gradually passes into it. The perpetrator of unconscious absurdities gradually begins to manufacture them consciously and of malice prepense. He talks in 'Ercles vein and winks at us, as if he saw the joke himself. The mere buncombe of orators passes into the quaint exaggerations characteristic of the Western States, who describe themselves as half horse, half alligator, with a dash of the earthquake. The most outrageous bombast of the war proceeded from the notorious Parson Brownlow, who said, if we remember right, that he proposed, if necessary, to fight the "Secesh" till hell froze, and then to fight them on the ice. The strong touch of profanity which is here characteristically introduced, produces another distinct form of exaggerated language. It is common, especially in the South-western States, to meet people who seem to have made a study of the art of profane swearing. They invent new and curious oaths. They systematically interlard every sentence with a choice collection of peculiar epithets. They absolutely coruscate into explosions of new-fangled oaths, going off like some novel piece of fireworks. It is obviously impossible to quote any appropriate specimens of this language.

The use of very big words, either seriously, or as a more or less consciously absurd piece of extravagance, is not the really characteristic part of American humour. There are, indeed, two ways of producing a comic effect which may be considered as the inverse of each other. An absurd overstatement or an absurd understatement may be equally effective. When Falstaff tells Bardolph that his face is an "everlasting bonfire light;" that he has "saved him a thousand marks in links and torches, walking in the night betwixt tavern and tavern," he gives a good specimen of the first. A well-known American example is the assertion of the Mississippi captain, that his boat could float wherever the ground was a little damp. To illustrate the second, we might quote the American, who had managed to quote something in his native country to parallel all the wonders of Europe. At last, he was asked whether he had not just crossed the Alps. "Well," he replied, "I guess I passed some risin' ground." The philosophy of the two methods is perhaps the same; but the second is the commoner amongst the genuine American humourists. When Artemus Ward describes his courtship, he begins by informing his beloved that she was a gazelle: which, he remarks, "I thought was putty

fine." He goes on, "I wish thar was winders to my soul, so that you could see some of my feelin's. There's fire enough in here to bile all the cornbeef and turnips in the neighbourhood. Vescoovius and the critter ain't a circumstance!" To all which, the lady replies, after some more attempts at eloquence on the approved models, "You say rite strate out what you are drivin' at. If you mean gettin' hitched, I'm in!" This may be taken as an illustration of the nature of the real popular humour. It is to a considerable extent a protest by shrewd common sense against the bombast which is so prevalent, but which does not quite succeed in passing itself off for genuine. When a man, naturally acute, is set down to hear orators spout nonsense, he is sometimes sufficiently awed to accept it for genuine,—he feels that he is not entitled to be a critic; but his native sense enables him to have occasional glimpses of its absurdity, and he expresses himself in rather coarse but very terse condemnation.

The original source of American humour is, therefore, to be looked for in such men as Franklin. He was the incarnation of that popular wisdom which generates proverbs and fables. His philosophy never soars above a rather low level; it takes the form of very racy maxims—of the great family to which belong the axioms about a penny saved being a penny got, and the advantages gained by being early to bed and early to rise. A characteristic story is the one which he told to console Jefferson for the alterations made in the draft of the Declaration of Independence. A friend of his had put up as a sign, a neatly painted hat, with the inscription, "John Brown, hatter, makes and repairs hats for ready money." One acquaintance suggested that the hat was not wanted, as the inscription explained his trade. A second observed that the remark about ready money was imprudent; a third, that as every hatter made and repaired hats, the words after hatter might be left out and nothing substituted; and a fourth, that every one knew he was a hatter, or would see the hats in the window; so that the inscription was reduced to "John Brown." Moral: don't be too sensitive to your friends' advice. The same vein of humour appears in the innumerable anecdotes about Mr. Lincoln, who is the exact illustration of the great stratum of American society which forms the real strength of the nation, but is very feebly represented by its newspapers and politicians. It is enough to allude to one or two of Mr. Lincoln's well-known sayings. There is the one illustrating the difficulty of joining the North and South; about the architect who said that he could build a bridge to the infernal regions, on which his friend remarked that he had "some doubts about the abutment on the 'other side.'" There is his answer to some one who requested him to interfere about some trifling detail, telling how the captain of a flatboat was asked by a father to stop in the middle of a dangerous rapid, that his little boy might pick up an apple which he had dropped overboard; or there is the last hint which he gave about reconstruction in reference to the new state government in Louisiana, that it is better to hatch your

eggs than to break them. The sayings rightly or wrongly attributed to him, with the invariable commencement, "I knew a man down West," may all be described as half-baked proverbs. If they were a little more compressed, and had a rather wider application, they might easily become proverbial and would contain a philosophy very superior to Mr. Tupper's. They excellently represent the peculiar national humour, as, indeed, many of them were no doubt sayings at large upon society, to which Mr. Lincoln was forced to act as sponsor. The political tone which they indicate has a great deal that reminds us much more of English sentiment than would be inferred from the set utterances of the official organs. There is the same strong contempt for humbug, and for "highfalutin" sentiment; the same strong practical sense and dislike for the declaration of lofty abstract principles. The humour is, it is true, a good deal dryer; it is, perhaps, keener, and it is certainly often more profane. To represent the typical producer of the commodity, we must first take a good solid English middle-class Puritan. Let him be baked in summer and frozen in winter till he has lost his superfluous fat and his fresh complexion; he will then have run up an inch or two in height and rather lost in girth—especially round the waist. Suppose him to have retained in the process a good deal of his familiarity with the Bible, but to have lost some of his respect for it; he must have forgotten his traditional reverence for the Church and the House of Lords, and have been preached at by "windbags" of home growth till he is beginning to see through a good many of their tricks. His natural shrewdness has been increased, but he has become more reserved, more sensitive, and not quite so good-tempered. And finally, he must have come very decidedly to the conclusion (about which we will not argue) that he is, on the whole, one of the finest fellows on earth, and the centre, or in the Yankee phrase, the "hub" of the civilized world. He will give out his aphorisms with a mingled air of shrewdness, self-restraint, and complacency; and they will be tinged with an occasional half-conscious dash of extravagance. The result will be illustrated by a short notice of one or two of the late humorous writings.

Artemus Ward is, on the whole, the best specimen of the last crop of humourists. He, it is true, owes something to his system of spelling, which is a small enough form of wit. There isn't very much fun in writing "hence4th," or in putting "goakin" for joking. Eccentric spelling is as necessary in the *Biglow Papers* as it is in *Burns*, because it is a genuine attempt to give the dialect of the country. Every humourist necessarily loses a great deal, by not being able to represent the peculiar nasal drawl, which seems to correspond to the mental attitude of the speaker. Many of the most excellent sayings in all conversation won't keep. Deprived of the manner, and of the dramatic dialogue which explains them at the time, they become stupid; they cannot retain their brilliancy in a dry state. The spelling which represents the original pronunciation is therefore a fair expedient; but the arbitrary blunders, such as quoting

"Hamlet's Soliloquy," "2 B or not 2 B"—are simply unmeaning. There are, however, better things than this in *Artemus*, and in his visit to the Mormons he has even ventured to spell correctly. His humour has the genuine Yankee cast, although it does not contain very brilliant specimens. He only occasionally writes on political topics, which are the staple of most of his imitators and rivals. We may quote one or two bits from his visit to the Mormons, as examples of his style. In passing through Nevada he remarks, "Shooting isn't as popular in Nevada as it once was. A few years since they used to have 'dead man for breakfast'" (a playful Californian phrase) "every morning. A reformed desperado told me that he supposed he had killed men enough to stock a graveyard. 'A feeling of remorse,' he said, 'sometimes comes over me! But I'm an altered man now. I hain't killed a man for over two weeks. What'll yer poison yourself with?' he added, dealing a resonant blow on the bar." This is followed by a story of a notorious desperado, whose practice it was to call for liquor, and, if any one declined joining him, "to commence shooting." At last, on a refusal of some stranger, he drew his revolver and exclaimed, "Good God, *must* I kill a man every time I come to Carson?" with which pathetic words, "of sorrow rather than of anger," he fired and killed his man. "The citizens," however, thought this a trifle too much and shot the murderer down with rifles. This is the kind of story which the narrator tells with imperturbable gravity of countenance, pleased if you laugh, and doubly pleased if you are credulous enough to be awed. He describes Mormonism with the same kind of humorous calmness. In his imaginary visit to Brigham Young, when the prophet says in answer to a question, "'I hev eighty wives, Mister Ward. I sertainly am married,' 'How do you like it as far as you hev got?' sed I." In his real visit he seems to have taken much the same point of view. "Brigham Young," he says, "is a man of great natural ability. If you ask me how pious he is, I treat it as a conundrum, and give it up." But he speaks civilly of the Mormons, who are fond of balls, shows, and theatres. The plays have to be modified, as one of the Mormons left a representation of the *Lady of Lyons* together with his twenty-four wives, because he wouldn't see a play where a man made such a cussed fuss over one woman. Perhaps his best story, as one illustrative of the worst side of Yankee shrewdness, relates to a conversation which he professes to have heard in a New England store to the following effect:—

"Say, Bill, wot you done with that air sorril mare of yourn?"

"Sold her," said William, with a smile of satisfaction.

"Wot'd you git?"

"Hund'd an' fifty dollars, cash deown."

"How! Hund'd an' fifty for that kickin' spavin' critter? Who'd you sell her to?"

"Sold her to mother!"

"Wot?" exclaimed brother No. 1, "did you really sell that kickin' spavin'd critter to mother? Wall, you *air* a shrewd one!"

Humourous literature in America, as well as every other kind of literature, has been of late chiefly devoted to the war as the one great topic of interest. We may remark, by the way, that a very unfair criticism has been made by some writers, who seem to fancy that we stopped all joking during the Crimean war; that *Punch*, whilst it lasted, never made a hit at Lord Aberdeen, or that Gilray never caricatured Pitt in the revolutionary wars. The Americans, it was said, joked about the war because their hearts were not in it. This is simply absurd. Rightly or wrongly, they certainly gave every proof of being absorbed in the war to an almost incredible extent. That was, however, no reason why they should abandon the use of their trenchant and sometimes rather grim style of humour. When some one reproached President Lincoln for his jokes during some of the worst part of the war, he replied, that but for such a relaxation he could not have borne the weight of anxiety. His last very touching inaugural message gives, no doubt, the most prevailing colour of his mind, which was an almost pathetic melancholy; and, indeed, it may be observed that men with a very strong sense of humour are frequently inclined to melancholy intervals. We don't suppose that the occasional facetiousness of the American people was the consequence of any such necessity for relief, but it was certainly as compatible with the deepest sentiment. The general tone of thought, though not the method of expression, may be fairly imagined, by taking one of the average Englishmen, who, as an Englishman, condemned the war heartily; thought it was nonsense to fight to force men into brotherly kindness; considered the Abolitionists to be humbugs, and the United States to be running into hopeless bankruptcy. Such a man, transplanted for a sufficient time, would absorb the popular prejudices of his new soil. He would adopt as blindly a different set of national commonplaces. He would insensibly substitute a fanatical belief in an idol called the Union for a belief in old England; he would hate humbugs and agitators and corrupt jobs heartily, and unreasonable philanthropy more heartily still. The hatred which Englishmen felt for "red tape" in the Crimean war, and the contempt which they (some of them at least) have expressed for nigger-worshippers during the Jamaica troubles, may represent the feelings of the genuine Yankee population towards green-backs and shoddy aristocracies on the one hand, and the irrepressible negro on the other. We who wished honestly to see the nigger free, hated him as the cause of the troubles, and as our English or "Anglo-Saxon" breed always hates an inferior race. The battery of the humourists is generally directed to play upon these obnoxious objects. The prevalent view of the nigger is excellently put by Artemus Ward. "Feller sitterszens, the Afrikan may be our brother . . . , but the Afrikan isn't our sister and our wife and our uncle. He isn't several of our brothers and all our fust wife's relations. He isn't

our grandfather and our great-grandfather, and our aunt in the country. Scarcely; and yet numeris persons would have us think so But we've got the Afrikan, or ruther he's got us, and now wot air we going to do about it? He's a orful noosance. P'raps he isn't to blame for it. P'raps he was created for sum wise purpuss, like the measles and New Englan' rum; but it's mity hard to see it." The reckless Government expenditure is tolerably satirized in the *Orpheus C. Kerr Papers*; which, however, are, as a rule, very poor. The author goes to see the trial of a gun, similar to those used at the Revolution, only that it was painted green instead of blue, and had a larger touch-hole. Being pointed at a target 60 yards off, the target is not hit, and no ball can be found. After great surprise somebody looks into the mouth and observes that the ball has not gone out at all. "The inventor said this would happen sometimes, especially if you didn't put a brick over the touch-hole when you fired the gun." The Government orders forty guns on the spot, at 200,000 dollars a piece. This is rather a ponderous attempt at witticism, but is enough to indicate the nature of a good deal of popular facetiousness. Another side of the negro question is touched upon in Ward's visit to Richmond after the siege.

"My brother, I sed to a cullerd purson, air you aware that you've bin 'mancipated? Do you realize how glorious it is to be free? tell me, my dear brother, does it not seem like some dream, or do you realize the great fact in all it's lovin' and holy magnitood?"

"He said he would take some gin."

Another bit in the same vein illustrates the feeling towards the Southern whites. Artemus remarks:—"There is raly a great deal of Union sentiment in this city—I see it on ev'ry hand. I met a man to-day, who said, 'Why, we've bin fightin' agin the old flag! Lor' bless me, how sing'lar!' He then borrowed five dollars of me and bust into a flood of tears." And the general verdict on the war is summed up as follows, at the end of a conversation with a "prowd and hawty Suthener."

"Young man, adoo. You Southern fellows is probbly my brothers, though you've occasionally had a cussed queer way of showin' it! It's over now. Let's all give in and make a country on this continent that shall give all Europe the cramp in the stummuck every time they look at us. Adoo, adoo! And as I am through, I'll likewise say adoo to you, gentle reader, merely remarking, that the star-spangled banner is wavin' round loose agin, and that there don't seem to be anything the matter with the Goddess of Liberty beyond a slight cold"

With which characteristic touch of Mr. Ward's we must leave him. Though not very brilliant, he fairly represents the average popular sentiment. A much higher representative of the political feeling of the country is to be found in Mr. Lowell, author of the *Biglow Papers*. The first series of those papers, which reflects the sensation produced in the North by the Mexican war, and the annexation of Texas, was to many people the

first revelation of American humour. Although they would require a commentary to enable the English reader fully to understand their allusions, their brilliant hits, enclosed in language equally quaint and caustic, impressed many unacquainted with American politics. Such a verse as this fixes itself on the memory, although the reader might have never heard of General Jackson's letter, in which the expression about "area of freedom" occurs, nor even have known who the famous General was, and still less who were Cass and Calhoun:—

The mass ough' to labour and we lay on sofies,
 Thet's the reason I want to spread Freedom's arce;
 It puts all the cunnin'est on us in office,
 An' reelises our Maker's orig'nal idee,
 Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he;—
 Thet's ex plain, says Cass
 As that some one's an ass,
 It's ex clear as the sun is at noon, sez he.

It is a very dangerous thing to attempt to repeat a successful hit. The number of works is small in which the second part is not inferior to the first, and for the simple reason that the first is generally spontaneous, and the second done to order. And we cannot honestly say that Mr. Lowell's poems appear to us to be an exception to the rule. There are, however, amongst them, some lines as vigorous and pointed as he ever wrote, and they give us a good example of humour rising nearly to the pitch of genius. They are as shrewd and racy as the best of the floating stories of Yankee wit. But they are directed by the honourable indignation which justifies satire; he lays on the whip viciously, but on faults which well deserve whipping. Englishmen will naturally think him mistaken in some of his judgments of men and things, but they will not deny that his verses exhibit real passion and of a dignified kind. Although, therefore, they have the genuine American flavour, they have not that hardness and narrowness of feeling which sometimes repels us in American stories. They prove that an American of real cultivation can be large-minded and genial, whilst remaining thoroughly American. We quote one or two verses, though it does them little justice to take them apart from the context. Here, for example, is a bit taken at random from a poem on the Trent affair:—

When your rights was our wrong, John,
 You didn't stop for fuss—
 Britanny's trident-prongs, John,
 Was good 'nough law for us.
 Ole uncle S., sez he, "I guess,
 Though physic's good," sez he,
 "It doesn't foller, that that he can swaller
 Prescriptions sign'd 'J. B.,'
 Put up by you or me."

We take this merely as an example of the style. It is homely and forcible, but sometimes falls into the fault that it requires to be read twice

over before its meaning is exactly seized. To take a specimen of a passage in which the humour is almost overpowered by the passion, we quote the last two verses of the last paper, which alludes to the emancipation proclamation upon which Lincoln had at last ventured :—

An' come wut will, I think it's grand
 Abe's gut his will et last bloom-furnaced
 In trial-flames till it'll stand
 The strain of bein' in deadly earnest ;
 Thet's wut we want—we want to know
 The folks on our side hez the bravery
 To b'lieve as hard, come weal, come woe,
 In Freedom ez Jeff. does in Slavery.
 Set the two forces foot to foot,
 An' every man knows who'll be winner,
 Whose faith in God hez any root
 'That goes down deeper than his dinner.
 Then 't will be felt from pole to pole,
 Without no need of proclamation,
 Earth's biggest country's gut her soul,
 An' risen up earth's Greatest Nation !

Much American humour consists of saying high-flown expressions by bringing them down abruptly to the best of plain facts : as in the case of the niggers and abolition ; but as that case shows, much that is really noble is apt to suffer along with its imitation ; and hence some of the cynical hardness of which we have spoken. In the last verses, Mr. Lowell takes a different method, and makes the really noble ambition, which lies at the bottom of enormous piles of bombast and buncombe in the American mind, come out the more vigorously for being put into homely language.

There is one more characteristic of American humour which we must notice—the familiar use of scriptural language. In certain cases this is perfectly natural and harmless. An uneducated man mixes up scripture and common life more frequently in proportion to his belief in scripture. Many of the stories which seem risky to us would be impressive to the original speakers. A certain Mr. Lorenzo Daw preached a sermon on the text from St. Paul, “I can do all things.” “No, Paul,” he said, “you are wrong for once. I'll bet you five dollars you can't,” and he laid down a five-dollar bill on the desk. He continued to read, “through Jesus Christ our Lord.” “Ah ! Paul,” he said, “that's a very different thing ; the bet's off.” This decidedly beats any anecdote we ever heard of Mr. Spurgeon ; but there was formerly a race of preachers in the United States in whose mouths such a saying would seem to be very natural. There was a well-known Peter Cartwright, a Methodist preacher in Tennessee, who has published certain “sketches and eccentricities.” The style of this gentleman's eloquence may be judged of from the following. A certain major “flew into a desperate rage, and said if he thought I would fight him a duel he would challenge me.

" 'Major,' I said, very calmly, 'if you challenge me, I will accept it.'

" 'Well, sir,' said he, 'I do dare you to mortal combat.'

" 'Very well, I'll fight you; and, sir,' said I, 'according to the laws of honour I suppose it is my right to choose the weapons with which we are to fight?'

" 'Certainly,' said he.

" 'Well,' said I, 'then we will step over into this lot and get a couple of cornstalks. I think I can finish you with one.'

" But oh! what a rage he got into. He clenched his fists and looked vengeance. Said he, 'If I thought I could whip you, I would smite you in a moment.'

" 'Yes, yes, major,' said I; 'but, thank God! you can't whip me; but don't you attempt to strike me; for, if you do, and the devil gets out of you into me, I shall give you the worst whipping you ever got in all your life!' and then walked off and left him."

This vigorous parson was said, on another occasion, to have held a profane ferryman under water till he would promise to say the Lord's prayer. He afterwards became intimate with General Jackson, on an occasion certainly creditable in some respects to both. The General came one evening to the church where he was already preaching. An officious hanger-on of the General's wanted him to take some notice of his arrival. "I felt," he says, "a flush of indignation come out all over me, and purposely speaking out audibly, I said, 'Who is General Jackson? If he don't get his soul converted, God will damn him as quick as he would a Guinea negro.'" Whereupon the preacher and the General became intimate friends. This rough preacher in the half-settled districts was no doubt suited to his flock. Amongst the more civilized New England population, the mixture of sacred and profane has been due to Puritan traditions, and still survives to some extent to the present time. Where every one is sufficiently educated to read the Bible, and the Bible is the first book that every one reads, a great many of its phrases are sure to pass into common use. Our modern plan of treating the Bible respectfully by carefully keeping it out of the way of common life, is a piece of refinement incomprehensible to minds which have not been made so sensitive by education. We would rather not decide which practice shows most belief, though it is plain which shows most reverence. The use of scriptural phrases has, however, in America come down to people who are little in the habit of reading the Bible with much faith or with much respect. The consequence is, that a good many modern American witticisms certainly strike an Englishman as profane. There is the one, which everybody knows, which recounts the trapper's prayer when he was in danger from a grisly bear. We mention it as a curious example of the way in which a story passes from one people to another, and by being accommodated to different scenery takes a different humorous tinge. Mr. Carlyle, in the *Life of Frederick*, relates the anecdote in an earlier—we

cannot say whether it is the original—form, where a Prussian General implores the divine favour upon the Prussian arms in the approaching battle, and, if that cannot be granted, implores, at least, the divine neutrality. In the American version, the profanity is somewhat heightened by the way in which the sight of a tarnation big bear-fight seems to be thrown in as an inducement towards granting the prayer. This accusation has been brought against Mr. Lowell, as, for example, in regard to the well-known verse—

Parson Wilbur sez he never heerd in his life
That the Apostles rigged out in their swaller-tall coats
An' marched round in front of a drum and a fife,
To get some on 'em office or some on 'em votes;
But John P.
Robinson ho
Sez they didn't know ev'rything down in Judee.

It is impossible to pronounce positively on such a point, because the effect depends so much upon our conventional mode of showing respect. We may, however, say, that if the writer is to be judged by his intention, Mr. Lowell must be fully acquitted; he uses the most vigorous illustrations that come to hand, without very carefully asking where they come from; but he never gives us what can be fairly called gratuitous profanity.

Most of the humour of which we have quoted examples, is what may be called "applied humour." It is the result of shrewd, and for the most part, half-educated minds, acting upon matters of every-day interest, amongst which, of course, politics occupy a prominent part in America. We should, in order to complete the subject, take notice of the pure humour; of humour, that is, which exists only for its own sake, and which scarcely arises until there has grown up a class with taste for literary leisure, and which goes through intellectual exercises for the love of them. Such, for example, are Charles Lamb's exquisite Essays, whose existence is sufficient to justify themselves. We read them not to learn, but for the pleasure of the exquisite style and graceful play of thought. Of this kind of humour, it may be supposed that we shall meet with few examples in America, from their love of the practical, and from the smaller number of finished scholars. A man doesn't begin to write pure humour or Latin verses till he has time on his hands. Artemus Ward can only be classed one degree above the wax-figure showmen whom he personates. He is not enough of an intellectual being to come up to the character we require. Washington Irving and Mr. Hawthorne showed some very delicate humour, but it was scarcely original enough to be distinctly American. It reminded us not distantly of European models. We can, however, mention one writer who has shown a very distinctive and thoroughly national humour; we mean Dr. Holmes. He shows the peculiar shrewdness of his countrymen, but applied to more refined

objects of thought. He is often quaint, but is never guilty of transgressing the bounds of really good taste. It is, however, unfair to attempt a summary of his merits at the end of an article, and we will, therefore, conclude our quotations by a short specimen taken from his most amusing book, *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-table* :—

“ Our brains are seventy-year clocks ; the angel of life winds them up once for all, then closes the case, and gives the key into the hand of the angel of resurrection.

“ Tic-tac, tic-tac, go the wheels of thought ; our will cannot stop them ; they cannot stop themselves ; sleep cannot still them ; madness only makes them go faster ; death alone can break into the case, and seizing the ever-swinging pendulum, which we call the heart, silence at last the clicking of the terrible escapement we have carried so long beneath our wrinkled foreheads !

“ If we could only get at them as we lie on our pillows, and count the dead beats of thought after thought, and image after image jarring through the overtired organ. Will nobody block these wheels, uncouple that pinion, cut the string that holds these weights, blow up the infernal machine with gunpowder ? . . . If anybody would only contrive some kind of a lever that we could thrust in among the works of this horrid automaton and check them, or alter their rate of going, what would the world give for the discovery ? ”

“ From half a dime to a dime, according to the style of the place and the quality of the liquor,” said the young fellow whom they call John.

“ You speak trivially, but not unwisely,” I said.

Recollections of Waterloo by a Surviving Veteran.

I WELL remember the morning of the 18th. The heavy rain during the night had chilled the air, the dark clouds overhead cast a gloom upon the field, and altogether the morning was unusually cheerless for the month of June. But I perceived no reflection of that gloom upon the faces of our men, and as column after column of the French came in sight, they maintained the same undaunted aspect. For my own part, I felt anxious—but not wholly on my own account. I had been pretty well seasoned to the smell of powder on the eastern coast of Spain; but I had a brother, quite a young fellow, who never had worn a red coat until two days before. This youth, being appointed to my own corps, I had smuggled away to join the regiment in place of the dépôt. I did it without leave, and the act was a rash one; but I thought it might perhaps be the making of him if he could see a little service. I now deplored my rashness. The lad appeared so unnerved that I feared he might disgrace himself, and bring ruin upon me too. If he ran off the field, what would follow? I shuddered at the thought. He would be stigmatized for life as a coward and a deserter, while I should be tried by court-martial, and perhaps dismissed the service for the breach of discipline I had committed.

"Oh, R., this is fearful!" said my hopeful protégé, as the shots began to tell. "Did you see poor ——— fall? And there's ——— killed! And I don't see ———, he must be gone too! we shall all soon be knocked over at this rate!" I called the sergeant of my company (poor fellow, he was numbered with the dead ere nightfall.) "Sergeant ———," said I, "you see my brother; he is quite a boy, unused to service. I entrust him to you; don't let him out of your sight a moment during the day. If I should fall, and he survives me, hand over my watch and purse to him; but mind and keep your eye upon him."

As it drew towards mid-day, the heat became oppressive, and it was truly painful to watch our brave troops bearing up against it under the ponderous accoutrements of those days. But none succumbed to the heat, and our gallant fellows handled brown Bess (a weapon that weighed fourteen pounds) with as good a will as the lucky chaps of the present day do the Enfield or the Whitworth.

We had now remained stationary some hours, drawn up in square, our ranks as yet not materially thinned, when a huge column of the enemy, bearing down all before it, opened so murderous a fire upon us, that our corps lost half its men. We retired to another position, where we re-formed square—a small square now, and in this attitude, on the defensive, we continued until the issue of the great fight was virtually decided.

Those only who have experienced what it is to be kept in an attitude of defence know how it tries the patience of the soldier. Our men were literally thirsting for a charge, but necessity forbade it. It was not so much our exposure to the fire of musketry or grape-shot that induced this longing to prod the enemy; but it was the charges, or rather the attempted charges, of the cavalry which provoked the feeling. Again and again came up the cuirassiers, but it was no go. The horses liked not those shining bayonets, and the bayonets never flinched; so, with bitter imprecations, they were compelled to turn tail. Many a brave cuirassier was brought to the ground while thus retracing his steps, our men having orders to fire at the horses as they retreated.

It was just after one of these charges, during a few minutes' respite, that I looked around me to see who was gone, or rather who was left, when to my dismay I could nowhere discern my brother. "Where was the sergeant under whose charge I had placed him?" "He was down," they told me. "And my brother?" "He has left the field." "Left the field!" exclaimed I in agony. "It's all right," replied a brother officer; "he was wounded—not badly; see, here is his shako." And sure enough, on examining the shako, I found it to be his; and, what was more satisfactory, a ball had smashed the peak and damaged the front; moreover, the inside was stained with blood.

It may seem strange, but the sight of that blood afforded me intense relief, especially when I heard that the wound was no way dangerous. The apprehension and self-reproach under which I had been labouring since the dawn all left me, and I commenced forthwith congratulating myself upon my own temerity, and to frame congratulations for my brother if I should live to meet him.

To us it seemed the day was going dead against us. To be sure, we could see but a section of the field; but if that presented a sample of the fight there was but one conclusion to arrive at, that we were outnumbered and overpowered by the enemy.

But the day was wearing away. In a few hours the sun would set, and if victory were denied us there was comfort in the thought that darkness would, at any rate for a space, terminate the combat. Doubt and speculation prevailed amongst us: the night's campaign was, indeed, beginning to be discussed, when a staff officer was descried galloping up towards us. He was evidently the bearer of an important communication. What was it? That the army was routed? That immediate retreat was ordered? Listen. "The body of the French army was in full retreat—we were to follow up the enemy!"

It would take an abler pen than mine to convey a notion of the effect this intelligence produced. The enthusiasm of our men sought vent in shouts, and with all speed we commenced carrying out the welcome order. Shots of all sorts and sizes were still flying about us, and in quitting the ground where we had passed so many weary hours, I received a wound in the knee: a rascally rifle-ball had lodged and stuck fast between the

small bones, putting me completely *hors de combat*. This was really too bad, being disabled just as the best fun was coming; but it was vain to grumble, and truly glad was I to be lifted on to the back of a stray horse which they caught and brought me. Declining any escort, I set out alone, telling my comrades I should make my way unassisted to the rear, if not to Brussels. I soon, however, became painfully aware of my error; for when well out of reach of help, the poor brute that carried me staggered and fell, having, I conclude, received some wound which had escaped detection.

My plight was now a sorry one. My knee was growing stiff, and swelling fearfully. Pain and weakness were increasing every moment, and I felt I must soon lie down amongst the dying and the dead. Still, on I limped, dragging after me the stiffening limb. I leant upon my sword, but it bent beneath my weight, and I resolved, if I could, to change it for one that would better support me. A few paces off lay the body of a French officer, awfully mangled by a round shot which had struck him in the bowels. As I glanced at his countenance, it seemed quite calm, and beyond the pallor on the cheeks there was little in the features to characterize his present slumber as the sleep of death, or to indicate preceding agony. No feeling of solicitude was it which brought me to the side of this poor fellow. I was attracted by his sword, a cavalry one with a steel scabbard—the very thing I wanted. To this I thought to help myself, and with what strength I could summon, I proceeded to detach the coveted sabre. While so engaged, it seemed to me that the body moved. Surely it was fancy. But the head *had* moved; and conceive my horror when the eyes I had supposed fast closed in death, opened feebly, and met mine. My fingers instinctively let loose their hold. Unnerved and ashamed, I stammered out an apology—“*Mille pardons—mal blessé—ne desirais que l’épée,*” when the Frenchman, with that native politeness which not even approaching death could restrain, tried to smile, and gasped just audibly, “*De grâce, monsieur, prenez tout !*” His all was at my service. No further use had he for sword or aught else now. His accoutrements were an evident incumbrance to him, so I eased his stock, unbuttoned his coat, and unhooked his waist-belt. He seemed relieved, and as I was taking leave of him, he asked whether I could give him anything to drink. Luckily I had a flask of brandy. So raising his head, I put it to his lips. He drank it off and strove to thank me. He then closed his eyes and muttered something I could not catch, while I gently replaced his head upon its dreary pillow. I then rose, feeling much saddened by this affecting incident, and as I stole one last look at the expiring soldier, the lips were still in motion, though whether with the words of prayer or of mere gratitude to me, I could not tell.

Leaning on the Frenchman's sword, I began once more to creep towards the rear; but faint and exhausted, I soon broke down in the attempt, and as I lay down amongst the tall rye-grass, I began to think my end was drawing near. I may have lain thus half an hour, when I

heard the tramp of cavalry approaching the spot where I lay hidden in the herbage. Was I then to be trodden to death? The thought was horrible. On and on they came. It must soon be all over with me. I resolved, sooner than submit to such a death, to make one more effort. Accordingly, I took off my cap, and placing it on the point of my sword, waved it to and fro as best I could. Providentially, the waving cap attracted notice. The gallant fellows (it was a squadron of the —th Dragoons) made way for me, and gently raising me on to the back of one of their horses, consigned me to the care of two troopers who conveyed me safely to the rear. It was late in the afternoon of the following day before the cartload of wounded of whom I formed one reached Brussels; and amongst the first that welcomed me on my arrival was my wounded brother. His head was bandaged so plentifully that a Turk might have envied him his head-dress. His delight at seeing me, if anything exceeded mine at meeting him. I asked him what he thought of the army. He said it was a fine service, but he had had enough of it; and from that day forth, as it happened, he never served again. He still lives, a hale old man of seventy. His forehead has an ugly scar, but it has paid him fairly, and I have never heard him grumble at the mark.

It took the surgeon just six weeks to extract the ball from my knee—six weeks of desperate suffering. Soon after this, my wound healed up, and I was on my feet once more. By way of blood-money, Government paid me down 500*l*. This I handed over to my agent, but he, poor man, got somehow into difficulties, cut his throat, and I lost all.

After five-and-thirty years of active service, I became a martyr to the pains and aches which my campaigning had induced, and I found myself compelled finally to lay aside my sword. Verging on fourscore, I still have strength to limp along, supported by a crutch on either side. I hope, ere long, to be summoned to the land of peace; meanwhile, may I be thankful that I live to tell the tale of Waterloo.

The Second Funeral of Napoleon.

(By MICHAEL ANGELO TITMARSH.)

[MR. THACKERAY once more appears in the pages of the *Cornhill Magazine*. We are about to give our readers some sketches of his, which have, indeed, been printed before, but that was when he was writing for a generation so astonishingly dull as to see no merit in *Barry Lyndon*; while we in these days wonder sometimes whether even Thackeray himself ever surpassed that little book, so wonderfully vigorous and keen. But he wrote many things then that were neglected, and were soon altogether forgotten. One of them was "THE SECOND FUNERAL OF NAPOLEON," of which probably not one in ten thousand of the readers of his Magazine ever heard. And yet it was published in due form and in decent duodecimo, by Mr. Hugh Cunningham, a bookseller whose shop was at the corner of St. Martin's Place: he who also first published the *Paris Sketch Book*. It was illustrated with some woodcuts of no great merit, and thereto was added the famous "Chronicle of the Drum,"—which the "leading Magazines" had all refused to print. And as the able editors of the time rejected the ballad, so the intelligent public of the time refused to read the account of the SECOND FUNERAL OF NAPOLEON, though it had all the allurements of being written at the time and in the presence of the event it commemorates. The gentleman who sends us the original MS., from which we reprint the long-forgotten narrative, says:—

"The 'Letters on the Second Funeral' were a failure. I had the pleasure of editing the tiny volume for Mr. Thackeray, and saw it through the press. And, after a while, on the dismal tidings from the publisher that the little effort made no impression on the public, Mr. Thackeray wrote to me from Paris a pretty little note commencing:—'So your poor Titmarsh has made another fiasco. How are we to take this great stupid public by the ears? Never mind; I think I have something which will surprise them yet. . . .' This was evidently an allusion to *Vanity Fair*, which he had begun at that time."]

I.—ON THE DISINTERMENT OF NAPOLEON AT ST. HELENA.

MY DEAR,—It is no easy task in this world to distinguish between what is great in it, and what is mean; and many and many is the puzzle that I have had in reading History (or the works of fiction which go by that name), to know whether I should ladd up to the skies, and endeavour, to the best of my small capabilities, to imitate the remarkable characters about whom I was reading, or whether I should sling aside the book and

the hero of it, as things altogether base, unworthy, laughable, and get a novel, or a game of billiards, or a pipe of tobacco, or the report of the last debate in the House, or any other employment which would leave the mind in a state of easy vacuity, rather than pester it with a vain set of dates relating to actions which are in themselves not worth a fig, or with a parcel of names of people whom it can do one no earthly good to remember.

It is more than probable, my love, that you are acquainted with what is called Grecian and Roman history, chiefly from perusing, in very early youth, the little sheepskin-bound volumes of the ingenious Dr. Goldsmith, and have been indebted for your knowledge of our English annals to a subsequent study of the more voluminous works of Hume and Smollett. The first and the last-named authors, dear Miss Smith, have written each an admirable history,—that of the Reverend Dr. Phipps, Vicar of Wakefield, and that of Mr. Robert Bramble, of Bramble Hall—in both of which works you will find true and instructive pictures of human life and which you may always think over with advantage. But let me caution you against putting any considerable trust in the other works of these authors, which were placed in your hands at school and afterwards, and in which you were taught to believe. Modern historians, for the most part, know very little, and, secondly, only tell a little of what they know.

As for those Greeks and Romans whom you have read of in “sheepskin,” were you to know really what those monsters were, you would blush all over as red as a hollyhock, and put down the history book in a fury. Many of our English worthies are no better. You are not in a situation to know the real characters of any one of them. They appear before you in their public capacities, but the individuals you know not. Suppose, for instance, your mamma had purchased her tea in the Borough from a grocer living there by the name of Greenacre: suppose you had been asked out to dinner, and the gentleman of the house had said: “Ho! François! a glass of champagne for Miss Smith;”—Courvoisier would have served you just as any other footman would; you would never have known that there was anything extraordinary in these individuals, but would have thought of them only in their respective public characters of Grocer and Footman. This, Madam, is History, in which a man always appears dealing with the world in his apron, or his laced livery, but which has not the power or the leisure, or, perhaps, is too high and mighty to condescend to follow and study him in his privacy. Ah, my dear, when big and little men come to be measured rightly, and great and small actions to be weighed properly, and people to be stripped of their royal robes, beggars’ rags, generals’ uniforms, seedy out-at-elbowed coats, and the like—or the contrary, say, when souls come to be stripped of their wicked deceiving bodies, and turned out stark naked as they were before they were born—what a strange startling sight shall we see, and what a pretty figure shall some of us cut! Fancy how we shall see Pride, with his Stulz-clothes and padding pulled off, and dwindled down to a forked radiash! Fancy some Angelic Virtue, whose white raiment is suddenly

whisked over his head, showing us cloven feet and a tail! Fancy Humility, eased of its sad load of cares and want and scorn, walking up to the very highest place of all, and blushing as he takes it! Fancy,—but we must not fancy such a scene at all, which would be an outrage on public decency. Should we be any better than our neighbours? No, certainly. And as we can't be virtuous, let us be decent. Fig-leaves are a very decent, becoming wear, and have been now in fashion for four thousand years. And so, my dear, History is written on fig-leaves. Would you have anything further? O die!

Yes, four thousand years ago, that famous tree was planted. At their very first lie, our first parents made for it, and there it is still the great Humbug Plant, stretching its wide arms, and sheltering beneath its leaves, as broad and green as ever, all the generations of men. Thus, my dear, coquettes of your fascinating sex cover their persons with figgery, fantastically arranged, and call their masquerading, modesty. Cowards fig themselves out fiercely as 'salvage men,' and make us believe that they are warriors. Fools look very solemnly out from the dusk of the leaves, and we fancy in the gloom that they are sages. And many a man sets a great wreath about his pate and struts abroad a hero, whose claims we would all of us laugh at, could we but remove the ornament and see his numskull bare.

And such—(excuse my sermonizing)—such is the constitution of mankind, that men have as it were entered into a compact among themselves to pursue the fig-leaf system *à l'outrance*, and to cry down all who oppose it. Humbug they will have. Humbugs themselves, they will respect humbugs. Their daily victuals of life must be seasoned with humbug. Certain things are there in the world that they will not allow to be called by their right names, and will insist upon our admiring, whether we will or no. Woe be to the man who would enter too far into the recesses of that magnificent temple where our Goddess is enshrined, peep through the vast embroidered curtains indiscreetly, penetrate the secret of secrets, and expose the 'Gammon of Gammons! And as you must not peer too curiously within, so neither must you remain scornfully without. Humbug-worshippers, let us come into our great temple regularly and decently; take our seats, and settle our clothes decently; open our books, and go through the service with decent gravity; listen, and be decently affected by the expositions of the decent priest of the place; and if by chance some straggling vagabond, loitering in the sunshine out of doors, dares to laugh or to sing, and disturb the sanctified dulness of the faithful;—quick! a couple of big beadles rush out and belabour the wretch, and his yells make our devotions more comfortable.

Some magnificent religious ceremonies of this nature are at present taking place in France; and thinking that you might perhaps while away some long winter evening with an account of them, I have compiled the following pages for your use. Newspapers have been filled, for some days past, with details regarding the Saint Helena expedition, many pamphlets

have been published, men go about crying little books and broadsheets filled with real or sham particulars: and from these scarce and valuable documents the following pages are chiefly compiled.

We must begin at the beginning, premising, in the first place, that Monsieur Guizot, when French ambassador at London, waited upon Lord Palmerston with a request that the body of the Emperor Napoleon should be given up to the French nation, in order that it might find a final resting-place in French earth. To this demand the English Government gave a ready assent; nor was there any particular explosion of sentiment upon either side, only some pretty cordial expressions of mutual good-will. Orders were sent out to St. Helena that the corpse should be disinterred in due time when the French expedition had arrived in search of it, and that every respect and attention should be paid to those who came to carry back to their country the body of the famous dead warrior and sovereign.

This matter being arranged in very few words (as in England upon most points is the laudable fashion), the French Chambers began to debate about the place in which they should bury the body when they got it; and numberless pamphlets and newspapers out of doors joined in the talk. Some people there were who had fought and conquered and been beaten with the great Napoleon, and loved him and his memory. Many more were there who, because of his great genius and valour, felt excessively proud in their own particular persons, and clamoured for the return of their hero. And if there was some few individuals in this great, hot-headed, gallant, boasting, sublime, absurd French nation, who had taken a cool view of the dead Emperor's character; if, perhaps, such men as Louis Philippe, and Monsieur A. Thiers, Minister and Deputy, and Monsieur François Guizot, Deputy and Excellency, had, from interest or conviction, opinions at all differing from those of the majority; why, they knew what was what, and kept their opinions to themselves, coming with a tolerably good grace and flinging a few handfuls of incense upon the altar of the popular idol.

In the succeeding debates, then, various opinions were given with regard to the place to be selected for the Emperor's sepulture. "Some demanded," says an eloquent anonymous Captain in the Navy who has written an *Itinerary from Toulon to St. Helena*, "that the coffin should be deposited under the bronze taken from the enemy by the French army—under the Column of the Place Vendôme. The idea was a fine one. This is the most glorious monument that was ever raised in a conqueror's honour. This column has been melted out of foreign cannon. These same cannons have furrowed the bosoms of our braves with noble cicatrices; and this metal—conquered by the soldier first, by the artist afterwards—has allowed to be imprinted on its front its own defeat and our glory. Napoleon might sleep in peace under this audacious trophy. But, would his ashes find a shelter sufficiently vast beneath this pedestal? And his puissant statue dominating Paris, beams with sufficient grandeur on this place: whereas the wheels of carriages and the feet of passengers would profane the funeral sanctity of the spot in trampling on the soil so near his head."

You must not take this description, dearest Amelia, "at the foot of the letter," as the French phrase it, but you will here have a masterly exposition of the arguments for and against the burial of the Emperor under the Column of the Place Vendôme. The idea was a fine one, granted; but, like all other ideas, it was open to objections. You must not fancy that the cannon, or rather the cannon-balls, were in the habit of furrowing the bosoms of French braves, or any other braves, with cicatrices: on the contrary, it is a known fact that cannon-balls make wounds, and not cicatrices (which, my dear, are wounds partially healed); nay, that a man generally dies after receiving one such projectile on his chest, much more after having his bosom furrowed by a score of them. No, my love; no bosom, however heroic, can stand such applications, and the author only means that the French soldiers faced the cannon and took them. Nor, my love, must you suppose that the column was melted; it was the cannon was melted, not the column; but such phrases are often used by orators when they wish to give a particular force and emphasis to their opinions.

Well, again, although Napoleon might have slept in peace under this audacious trophy, how could he do so and carriages go rattling by all night, and people with great iron heels to their boots pass clattering over the stones? Nor indeed could it be expected that a man whose reputation stretches from the Pyramids to the Kremlin, should find a column of which the base is only five-and-twenty feet square, a shelter vast enough for his bones. In a word, then, although the proposal to bury Napoleon under the column was ingenious, it was found not to suit; whereupon somebody else proposed the *Madelaine*.

"It was proposed," says the before-quoted author with his usual felicity, "to consecrate the *Madelaine* to his exiled manes"—that is, to his bones when they were not in exile any longer. "He ought to have, it was said, a temple entire. His glory fills the world. His bones could not contain themselves in the coffin of a man—in the tomb of a king!" In this case what was Mary Magdalen to do? "This proposition, I am happy to say, was rejected, and a new one—that of the President of the Council—adopted. Napoleon and his braves ought not to quit each other. Under the immense gilded dome of the Invalides he would find a sanctuary worthy of himself. A dome imitates the vault of heaven, and that vault alone" (meaning of course the other vault) "should dominate above his head. His old mutilated Guard shall watch around him: the last veteran, as he has shed his blood in his combats, shall break his last sigh near his tomb, and all these tombs shall sleep under the tattered standards that have been won from all the nations of Europe."

The original words are "*sous les lambeaux criblés des drapeaux cueillis chez toutes les nations*;" in English, "under the riddled rags of the flags that have been culled or plucked" (like roses or buttercups) "in all the nations." Sweet, innocent flowers of victory! there they are, my dear, sure enough, and a pretty considerable *hortus siccus* may any man examine who chooses to walk to the Invalides. The burial-place being thus agreed

on, the expedition was prepared, and on the 7th July the *Belle Poule* frigate, in company with *La Favorite* corvette, quitted Toulon harbour. A couple of steamers, the *Trident* and the *Ocean*, escorted the ships as far as Gibraltar, and there left them to pursue their voyage.

The two ships quitted the harbour in the sight of a vast concourse of people, and in the midst of a great roaring of cannons. Previous to the departure of the *Belle Poule*, the Bishop of Fréjus went on board, and gave to the cenotaph, in which the Emperor's remains were to be deposited, his episcopal benediction. Napoleon's old friends and followers, the two Bertrands, Gourgaud, Emanuel Las Cases, "companions in exile, or sons of the companions in exile of the prisoner of the *infâme* Hudson," says a French writer, were passengers on board the frigate. Marchand, Denis, Pierret, Novaret, his old and faithful servants, were likewise in the vessel. It was commanded by his Royal Highness Francis Ferdinand Philip Louis Marie d'Orleans, Prince de Joinville, a young prince two-and-twenty years of age, who was already distinguished in the service of his country and king.

On the 8th of October, after a voyage of six-and-sixty days, the *Belle Poule* arrived in James Town harbour, and on its arrival, as on its departure from France, a great firing of guns took place. First, the *Oreste* French brig-of-war began roaring out a salutation to the frigate; then the *Dolphin* English schooner gave her one-and-twenty guns; then the frigate returned the compliment of the *Dolphin* schooner; then she blazed out with one-and-twenty guns more, as a mark of particular politeness to the shore—which kindness the forts acknowledged by similar detonations.

These little compliments concluded on both sides, Lieutenant Middlemore, son and aide-de-camp of the Governor of St. Helena, came on board the French frigate, and brought his father's best respects to his Royal Highness. The Governor was at home ill, and forced to keep his room; but he had made his house at James Town ready for Captain Joinville and his suite, and begged that they would make use of it during their stay.

On the 9th, H. R. H. the Prince of Joinville put on his full uniform and landed, in company with Generals Bertrand and Gourgaud, Messrs. Las Cases, Marchand, M. Coquereau, the chaplain of the expedition, and M. de Rohan Chabot, who acted as chief mourner. All the garrison was under arms to receive the illustrious Prince and the other members of the expedition—who forthwith repaired to Plantation House, and had a conference with the Governor regarding their mission.

On the 10th, 11th, 12th, these conferences continued: the crews of the French ships were permitted to come on shore and see the tomb of Napoleon. Bertrand, Gourgaud, Las Cases wandered about the island and revisited the spots to which they had been partial in the lifetime of the Emperor.

The 15th October was fixed on for the day of the exhumation: that day five-and-twenty years, the Emperor Napoleon first set his foot upon the island.

On the day previous all things had been made ready: the grand coffins and ornaments brought from France, and the articles necessary for the operation were carried to the valley of the Tomb.

The operations commenced at midnight. The well-known friends of Napoleon before named, and some other attendants of his, the chaplain and his acolytes, the doctor of the *Belle Poule*, the captains of the French ships, and Captain Alexander of the Engineers, the English Commissioner, attended the disinterment. His Royal Highness Prince de Joinville could not be present because the workmen were under English command.

The men worked for nine hours incessantly, when at length the earth was entirely removed from the vault, all the horizontal strata of masonry demolished, and the large slab which covered the place where the stone sarcophagus lay, removed by a crane. This outer coffin of stone was perfect, and could scarcely be said to be damp.

"As soon as the Abbé Coquerneau had recited the prayers, the coffin was removed with the greatest care, and carried by the engineer-soldiers, bareheaded, into a tent that had been prepared for the purpose. After the religious ceremonies, the inner coffins were opened. The outermost coffin was slightly injured: then came one of lead, which was in good condition, and enclosed two others—one of tin and one of wood. The last coffin was lined inside with white satin, which, having become detached by the effect of time, had fallen upon the body and enveloped it like a winding-sheet, and had become slightly attached to it.

"It is difficult to describe with what anxiety and emotion those who were present waited for the moment which was to expose to them all that death had left of Napoleon. Notwithstanding the singular state of preservation of the tomb and coffins, we could scarcely hope to find anything but some misshapen remains of the least perishable part of the costume to evidence the identity of the body. But when Doctor Guillard raised the sheet of satin, an indescribable feeling of surprise and affection was expressed by the spectators, many of whom burst into tears. The Emperor was himself before their eyes! The features of the face, though changed, were perfectly recognized; the hands extremely beautiful; his well-known costume had suffered but little, and the colours were easily distinguished. The attitude itself was full of ease, and but for the fragments of the satin lining which covered, as with a fine gauze, several parts of the uniform, we might have believed we still saw Napoleon before us lying on his bed of state. General Bertrand and M. Marchand, who were both present at the interment, quickly pointed out the different articles which each had deposited in the coffin, and remained in the precise position in which they had previously described them to be.

"The two inner coffins were carefully closed again; the old leaden coffin was strongly blocked up with wedges of wood, and both were once more soldered up with the most minute precautions, under the direction of Dr. Guillard. These different operations being terminated, the ebony sarcophagus was closed as well as its oak case. On delivering the key of

the ebony sarcophagus to Count de Chabot, the King's Commissioner, Captain Alexander declared to him, in the name of the Governor, that this coffin, containing the mortal remains of the Emperor Napoleon, was considered as at the disposal of the French Government, from that day and from the moment at which it should arrive at the place of embarkation, towards which it was about to be sent under the orders of General Middlemore. The King's Commissioner replied that he was charged by his Government, and in its name, to accept the coffin from the hands of the British authorities, and that he and the other persons composing the French mission were ready to follow it to James Town, where the Prince de Joinville, superior commandant of the expedition, would be ready to receive it and conduct it on board his frigate. A car drawn by four horses, decked with funereal emblems, had been prepared before the arrival of the expedition, to receive the coffin, as well as a pall, and all the other suitable trappings of mourning. When the sarcophagus was placed on the car, the whole was covered with a magnificent imperial mantle brought from Paris, the four corners of which were borne by Generals Bertrand and Gourgaud, Baron Las Cases and M. Marchand. At half-past three o'clock the funeral car began to move, preceded by a chorister bearing the cross, and by the Abbé Coquereau. M. de Chabot acted as chief mourner. All the authorities of the island, all the principal inhabitants, and the whole of the garrison, followed in procession from the tomb to the quay. But with the exception of the artillerymen necessary to lead the horses, and occasionally support the car when descending some steep parts of the way, the places nearest the coffin were reserved for the French mission. General Middlemore, although in a weak state of health, persisted in following the whole way on foot, together with General Churchill, chief of the staff in India, who had arrived only two days before from Bombay. The immense weight of the coffins, and the unevenness of the road, rendered the utmost carefulness necessary throughout the whole distance. Colonel Trelawney commanded in person the small detachment of artillerymen who conducted the car, and, thanks to his great care, not the slightest accident took place. From the moment of departure to the arrival at the quay, the cannons of the forts and the *Belle Poule* fired minute-guns. After an hour's march the rain ceased for the first time since the commencement of the operations, and on arriving in sight of the town we found a brilliant sky and beautiful weather. From the morning the three French vessels of war had assumed the usual signs of deep mourning: their yards crossed and their flags lowered. Two French merchantmen, *Bonne Amie* and *Indien*, which had been in the roads for two days, had put themselves under the Prince's orders, and followed during the ceremony all the manœuvres of the *Belle Poule*. The forts of the town, and the houses of the consuls, had also their flags half-mast high.

"On arriving at the entrance of the town, the troops of the garrison and the militia formed in two lines as far as the extremity of the quay. According to the order for mourning prescribed for the English army, the

men had their arms reversed and the officers had crape on their arms, with their swords reversed. All the inhabitants had been kept away from the line of march, but they lined the terraces commanding the town, and the streets were occupied only by the troops, the 91st Regiment being on the right and the militia on the left. The cortége advanced slowly between two ranks of soldiers to the sound of a funeral march, while the cannons of the forts were fired, as well as from the *Belle Poule* and the *Dolphin*, the echoes being repeated a thousand times by the rocks above James Town. After two hours' march the cortége stopped at the end of the quay, where the Prince de Joinville had stationed himself at the head of the officers of the three French ships of war. The greatest official honours had been rendered by the English authorities to the memory of the Emperor—the most striking testimonials of respect had marked the adieu given by St. Helena to his coffin; and from this moment the mortal remains of the Emperor were about to belong to France. When the funeral-car stopped, the Prince de Joinville advanced alone, and in presence of all around, who stood with their heads uncovered, received, in a solemn manner, the imperial coffin from the hands of General Middlemore. His Royal Highness then thanked the Governor, in the name of France, for all the testimonials of sympathy and respect with which the authorities and inhabitants of St. Helena had surrounded the memorable ceremonial. A cutter had been expressly prepared to receive the coffin. During the embarkation, which the Prince directed himself, the bands played funeral airs, and all the boats were stationed round with their oars shipped. The moment the sarcophagus touched the cutter, a magnificent royal flag, which the ladies of James Town had embroidered for the occasion, was unfurled, and the *Belle Poule* immediately squared her masts and unfurled her colours. All the manœuvres of the frigate were immediately followed by the other vessels. Our mourning had ceased with the exile of Napoleon, and the French naval division dressed itself out in all its festal ornaments to receive the imperial coffin under the French flag. The sarcophagus was covered in the cutter with the imperial mantle. The Prince de Joinville placed himself at the rudder, Commandant Guyet at the head of the boat; Generals Bertrand and Gourgaud, Baron de Las Cases, M. Marchand, and the Abbé Coquereau occupied the same places as during the march. Count Chabot and Commandant Hernoux were astern, a little in advance of the Prince. As soon as the cutter had pushed off from the quay, the batteries ashore fired a salute of twenty-one guns, and our ships returned the salute with all their artillery. Two other salutes were fired during the passage from the quay to the frigate, the cutter advancing very slowly, and surrounded by the other boats. At half-past six o'clock it reached the *Belle Poule*, all the men being on the yards with their hats in their hands. The Prince had had arranged on the deck a chapel, decked with flags and trophies of arms, the altar being placed at the foot of the mizen-mast. The coffin, carried by our sailors, passed between two ranks of officers with drawn swords, and was placed on the quarter-deck. The abso-

lution was pronounced by the Abbé Coquereau the same evening. Next day, at ten o'clock, a solemn mass was celebrated on the deck, in presence of the officers and part of the crews of the ships. His Royal Highness stood at the foot of the coffin. The cannon of the *Favorite* and *Oreste* fired minute-guns during this ceremony, which terminated by a solemn absolution; and the Prince de Joinville, the gentlemen of the mission, the officers, and the *premiers maîtres* of the ship, sprinkled holy water on the coffin. At eleven, all the ceremonies of the church were accomplished, all the honours done to a sovereign had been paid to the mortal remains of Napoleon. The coffin was carefully lowered between decks, and placed in the *chapelle ardente* which had been prepared at Toulon for its reception. At this moment, the vessels fired a last salute with all their artillery, and the frigate took in her flags, keeping up only her flag at the stern, and the royal standard at the maintopgallant-mast. On Sunday, the 18th, at eight in the morning, the *Belle Poule* quitted St. Helena with her precious deposit on board.

"During the whole time that the mission remained at James Town, the best understanding never ceased to exist between the population of the island and the French. The Prince de Joinville and his companions met in all quarters and at all times with the greatest good-will and the warmest testimonials of sympathy. The authorities and the inhabitants must have felt, no doubt, great regret at seeing taken away from their island the coffin that had rendered it so celebrated; but they repressed their feelings with a courtesy that does honour to the frankness of their character."

II.—ON THE VOYAGE FROM ST. HELENA TO PARIS.

ON the 18th October the French frigate quitted the island with its precious burden on board.

His Royal Highness the Captain acknowledged cordially the kindness and attention which he and his crew had received from the English authorities and the inhabitants of the Island of St. Helena; nay, promised a pension to an old soldier who had been for many years the guardian of the imperial tomb, and went so far as to take into consideration the petition of a certain lodging-house keeper, who prayed for a compensation for the loss which the removal of the Emperor's body would occasion to her. And although it was not to be expected that the great French nation should forego its natural desire of recovering the remains of a hero so dear to it for the sake of the individual interest of the landlady in question, it must have been satisfactory to her to find that the peculiarity of her position was so delicately appreciated by the august Prince who commanded the expedition, and carried away with him *animæ dimidium suæ*—the half of the genteel independence which she derived from the situation of her hotel. In a word, politeness and friendship could not be carried farther. The Prince's realm and the landlady's were bound

together by the closest ties of amity. M. Thiers was Minister of France, the great patron of the English alliance. At London M. Guizot was the worthy representative of the French good-will towards the British people; and the remark frequently made by our orators at public dinners, that "France and England, while united, might defy the world," was considered as likely to hold good for many years to come,—the union that is. As for defying the world, that was neither here nor there; nor did English politicians ever dream of doing any such thing, except perhaps at the tenth glass of port at Freemason's Tavern.

Little, however, did Mrs. Corbett, the Saint Helena landlady, little did his Royal Highness Prince Ferdinand Philip Marie de Joinville know what was going on in Europe all this time (when I say in Europe, I mean in Turkey, Syria, and Egypt); how clouds, in fact, were gathering upon what you call the political horizon; and how tempests were rising that were to blow to pieces our Anglo-Gallic temple of friendship. Oh, but it is sad to think that a single wicked old Turk should be the means of setting our two Christian nations by the ears!

Yes, my love, this disreputable old man had been for some time past the object of the disinterested attention of the great sovereigns of Europe. The Emperor Nicolas (a moral character, though following the Greek superstition, and adored for his mildness and benevolence of disposition), the Emperor Ferdinand, the King of Prussia, and our own gracious Queen, had taken such just offence at his conduct and disobedience towards a young and interesting sovereign, whose authority he had disregarded, whose fleet he had kidnapped, whose fair provinces he had pounced upon, that they determined to come to the aid of Abdul Medjid the First, Emperor of the Turks, and bring his rebellious vassal to reason. In this project the French nation was invited to join, but they refused the invitation, saying, that it was necessary for the maintenance of the balance of power in Europe that his Highness Mehmet Ali should keep possession of what by hook or by crook he had gotten, and that they would have no hand in injuring him. But why continue this argument, which you have read in the newspapers for many months past? You, my dear, must know as well as I, that the balance of power in Europe could not possibly be maintained in any such way; and though, to be sure, for the last fifteen years, the progress of the old robber has not made much difference to us in the neighbourhood of Russell Square, and the battle of Nezib did not in the least affect our taxes, our homes, our institutions, or the price of butcher's meat, yet there is no knowing what *might* have happened had Mehmet Ali been allowed to remain quietly as he was: and the balance of power in Europe might have been—the *deuce* knows where.

Here, then, in a nutshell, you have the whole matter in dispute. While Mrs. Corbett and the Prince de Joinville were innocently interchanging compliments at Saint Helena,—bang! bang! Commodore Napier was pouring broadsides into Tyre and Sidon; our gallant navy was storming breaches and routing armies; Colonel Hodges had seized upon the green

standard of Ibrahim Pacha; and the powder-magazine of Saint John of Acre was blown up sky-high, with eighteen hundred Egyptian soldiers in company with it. The French said that *l'or Anglais* had achieved all these successes, and no doubt believed that the poor fellows at Acre were bribed to a man.

It must have been particularly unpleasant to a high-minded nation like the French—at the very moment when the Egyptian affair and the balance of Europe had been settled in this abrupt way—to find out all of a sudden that the Pasha of Egypt was their dearest friend and ally. They had suffered in the person of their friend; and though, seeing that the dispute was ended, and the territory out of his hand, they could not hope to get it back for him, or to aid him in any substantial way, yet Monsieur Thiers determined, just as a mark of politeness to the Pasha, to fight all Europe for maltreating him,—all Europe, England included. He was bent on war, and an immense majority of the nation went with him. He called for a million of soldiers, and would have had them too, had not the King been against the project and delayed the completion of it at least for a time.

Of these great European disputes Captain Joinville received a notification while he was at sea on board his frigate, as we find by the official account which has been published of his mission.

"Some days after quitting Saint Helena," says that document, "the expedition fell in with a ship coming from Europe, and was thus made acquainted with the warlike rumours then afloat, by which a collision with the English marine was rendered possible. The Prince de Joinville immediately assembled the officers of the *Belle Poule*, to deliberate on an event so unexpected and important.

"The council of war having expressed its opinion that it was necessary at all events to prepare for an energetic defence, preparations were made to place in battery all the guns that the frigate could bring to bear against the enemy. The provisional cabins that had been fitted up in the battery were demolished, the partitions removed, and, with all the elegant furniture of the cabins, flung into the sea. The Prince de Joinville was the first 'to execute himself,' and the frigate soon found itself armed with six or eight more guns.

"That part of the ship where these cabins had previously been, went by the name of Lacedæmon: everything luxurious being banished to make way for what was useful.

"Indeed, all persons who were on board agree in saying that Monseigneur the Prince de Joinville most worthily acquitted himself of the great and honourable mission which had been confided to him. All affirm not only that the commandant of the expedition did everything at St. Helena which as a Frenchman he was bound to do in order that the remains of the Emperor should receive all the honours due to them, but moreover that he accomplished his mission with all the measured solemnity, all the pious and severe dignity, that the son of the Emperor

himself would have shown upon a like occasion. The commandant had also comprehended that the remains of the Emperor must never fall into the hands of the stranger, and being himself decided rather to sink his ship than to give up his precious deposit, he had inspired every one about him with the same energetic resolution that he had himself taken '*against an extreme eventuality.*' "

Monseigneur, my dear, is really one of the finest young fellows it is possible to see. A tall, broad-chested, slim-waisted, brown-faced, dark-eyed young prince, with a great beard (and other martial qualities no doubt) beyond his years. As he strode into the Chapel of the Invalides on Tuesday at the head of his men, he made no small impression, I can tell you, upon the ladies assembled to witness the ceremony. Nor are the crew of the *Belle Poule* less agreeable to look at than their commander. A more clean, smart, active, well-limbed set of lads never "did dance" upon the deck of the famed *Belle Poule* in the days of her memorable combat with the *Saucy Arethusa*. "These five hundred sailors," says a French newspaper, speaking of them in the proper French way, "sword in hand, in the severe costume of board-ship (*la severe tenue du bord*), seemed proud of the mission that they had just accomplished. Their blue jackets, their red cravats, the turned-down collars of blue shirts edged with white, *above all* their resolute appearance and martial air, gave a favourable specimen of the present state of our marine—a marine of which so much might be expected and from which so little has been required."—*Le Commerce* : 16th December.

There they were, sure enough ; a cutlass upon one hip, a pistol on the other—a gallant set of young men indeed. I doubt, to be sure, whether the *severe tenue du bord* requires that the seaman should be always furnished with these ferocious weapons, which in sundry maritime manœuvres, such as going to sleep in your hammock for instance, or twinkling a binnacle, or luffing a marlinspike, or keelhauling a maintopgallant (all naval operations, my dear, which any seafaring novelist will explain to you)—I doubt, I say, whether these weapons are *always* worn by sailors, and have heard that they are commonly, and very sensibly too, locked up until they are wanted. Take another example : suppose artillerymen were incessantly compelled to walk about with a pyramid of twenty-four-pound shot in one pocket, a lighted fuse and a few barrels of gunpowder in the other—these objects would, as you may imagine, greatly inconvenience the artilleryman in his peaceful state.

The newspaper writer is therefore most likely mistaken in saying that the seamen were in the *severe tenue du bord*, or by "*bord*" meaning "*abordage*"—which operation they were not, in a harmless church, hung round with velvet and wax-candles, and filled with ladies, surely called upon to perform. Nor indeed can it be reasonably supposed that the picked men of the crack frigate of the French navy are a "good specimen" of the rest of the French marine, any more than a cuirassed colossus at the gate of the Horse Guards can be considered a fair sample of the British

soldier of the line. The sword and pistol, however, had no doubt their effect—the former was in its sheath, the latter not loaded, and I hear that the French ladies are quite in raptures with these charming *louis-de-mer*.

Let the warlike accoutrements then pass. It was necessary, perhaps, to strike the Parisians with awe, and therefore the crew was armed in this fierce fashion; but why should the Captain begin to swagger as well as his men? and why did the Prince de Joinville lug out sword and pistol so early? or why, if he thought fit to make preparations, should the official journals brag of them afterwards as proofs of his extraordinary courage?

Here is the case. The English Government makes him a present of the bones of Napoleon: English workmen work for nine hours without ceasing, and dig the coffin out of the ground: the English Commissioner hands over the key of the box to the French representative, Monsieur Chabot: English horses carry the funeral-car down to the sea-shore, accompanied by the English Governor, who has actually left his bed to walk in the procession and to do the French nation honour.

After receiving and acknowledging these politenesses, the French Captain takes his charge on board, and the first thing we afterwards hear of him is the determination '*qu'il a su faire passer*' into all his crew, to sink rather than yield up the body of the Emperor *aux mains de l'étranger*—into the hands of the foreigner. My dear Monseigneur, is not this *par trop fort*? Suppose "the foreigner" had wanted the coffin, could he not have kept it? Why show this uncalled-for valour, this extraordinary alacrity at sinking? Sink or blow yourself up as much as you please, but your Royal Highness must see that the genteel thing would have been to wait until you were asked to do so, before you offended good-natured, honest people, who—heaven help them!—have never shown themselves at all murderously inclined towards you. A man knocks up his cabins forsooth, throws his tables and chairs overboard, runs guns into the port-holes, and calls *le quartier du bord où existaient ces chambres, Lacedæmon*. Lacedæmon! There is a province, O Prince, in your royal father's dominions, a fruitful parent of heroes in its time, which would have given a much better nickname to your *quartier du bord*: you should have called it Gascony.

Sooner than strike we'll all ex-pi-er

On board of the Bell-e Pou-le.

Such fanfaronnading is very well on the part of Tom Dibdin, but a person of your Royal Highness's "pious and severe dignity" should have been above it. If you entertained an idea that war was imminent, would it not have been far better to have made your preparations in quiet, and when you found the war-rumour blown over, to have said nothing about what you intended to do? Fie upon such cheap Lacedæmonianism! There is no poltroon in the world but can brag about what he *would* have done; however, to do your Royal Highness's nation justice, they brag and fight too.

This narrative, my dear Miss Smith, as you will have remarked, is

not a simple tale merely, but is accompanied by many moral and pithy remarks which form its chief value in the writer's eyes at least, and the above account of the sham Lacedæmon on board the *Belle Poule* has a double-barrelled morality, as I conceive. Besides justly reprehending the French propensity towards braggadocio, it proves very strongly a point on which I am the only statesman in Europe who has strongly insisted. In the *Paris Sketch Book* (one copy, I believe, is still to be had at the publisher's)—in the *Paris Sketch Book* it was stated that *the French hate us*. They hate us, my dear, profoundly and desperately, and there never was such a hollow humbug in the world as the French alliance. Men get a character for patriotism in France merely by hating England. Directly they go into strong opposition (where, you know, people are always more patriotic than on the ministerial side), they appeal to the people, and have their hold on the people by hating England in common with them. Why? it is a long story, and the hatred may be accounted for by many reasons, both political and social. Any time these eight hundred years this ill-will has been going on, and has been transmitted on the French side from father to son. On the French side, not on ours: we have had no, or few, defeats to complain of, no invasions to make us angry; but you see that to discuss such a period of time would demand a considerable number of pages, and for the present we will avoid the examination of the question.

But they hate us, that is the long and short of it, and you see how this hatred has exploded just now, not upon a serious cause of difference, but upon an argument; for what is the Pasha of Egypt to us or them but a mere abstract opinion? For the same reason the Littleendians in Lilliput abhorred the Bigendians; and I beg you to remark how his Royal Highness Prince Ferdinand Mary, upon hearing that this argument was in the course of debate between us, straightway flung his furniture overboard and expressed a preference for sinking his ship rather than yielding it to the *étranger*. Nothing came of this wish of his, to be sure; but the intention is everything. Unlucky circumstances denied him the power, but he had the will.

Well, beyond this disappointment, the Prince de Joinville had nothing to complain of during the voyage, which terminated happily by the arrival of the *Belle Poule* at Cherbourg, on the 30th of November, at five o'clock in the morning. A telegraph made the glad news known at Paris, where the Minister of the Interior, Tanneguy-Duchâtel (you will read the name, Madam, in the old Anglo-French wars), had already made "immense preparations" for receiving the body of Napoleon.

The entry was fixed for the 15th of November.

On the 8th of November at Cherbourg the body was transferred from the *Belle Poule* frigate to the *Normandie* steamer. On which occasion, the mayor of Cherbourg deposited, in the name of his town, a gold laurel branch upon the coffin—which was saluted by the forts and dikes of the place with ONE THOUSAND GUNS! There was a treat for the inhabitants.

There was on board the steamer a splendid receptacle for the coffin: "a temple with twelve pillars and a dome to cover it from the wet and moisture, surrounded with velvet hangings and silver fringes. At the head was a gold cross, at the foot a gold lamp: other lamps were kept constantly burning within, and vases of burning incense were hung around. An altar, hung with velvet and silver, was at the mizen-mast of the vessel, and four silver eagles at each corner of the altar." It was a compliment at once to Napoleon and—excuse me for saying so, but so the facts are—to Napoleon and to God Almighty.

Three steamers, the *Normandie*, the *Vélocé*, and the *Courrier*, formed the expedition from Cherbourg to Havre, at which place they arrived on the evening of the 9th of November, and where the *Vélocé* was replaced by the Seine steamer, having in tow one of the state-coasters, which was to fire the salute at the moment when the body was transferred into one of the vessels belonging to the Seine.

The expedition passed Havre the same night, and came to anchor at Val de la Haye on the Seine, three leagues below Rouen.

Here the next morning (10th), it was met by the flotilla of steamboats of the Upper Seine, consisting of the three *Dorades*, the three *Etoiles*, the *Elbeuvien*, the *Parisien*, the *Parisienne*, and the *Zampa*. The Prince de Joinville, and the persons of the expedition, embarked immediately in the flotilla, which arrived the same day at Rouen.

At Rouen salutes were fired, the National Guard on both sides of the river paid military honours to the body; and over the middle of the suspension-bridge a magnificent cenotaph was erected, decorated with flags, fasces, violet hangings, and the imperial arms. Before the cenotaph the expedition stopped, and the absolution was given by the archbishop and the clergy. After a couple of hours' stay, the expedition proceeded to Pont de l'Arche. On the 11th it reached Vernon, on the 12th Mantes, on the 13th Maisons-sur-Seine.

"Everywhere," says the official account from which the above particulars are borrowed, "the authorities, the National Guard, and the people flocked to the passage of the flotilla, desirous to render the honours due to his glory, which is the glory of France. In seeing its hero return, the nation seemed to have found its Palladium again,—the sainted relics of victory."

At length, on the 14th, the coffin was transferred from the *Dorade* steamer on board the imperial vessel arrived from Paris. In the evening, the imperial vessel arrived at Courbevoie, which was the last stage of the journey.

Here it was that M. Guizot went to examine the vessel, and was very nearly flung into the Seine, as report goes, by the patriots assembled there. It is now lying on the river, near the Invalides, amidst the drifting ice, whither the people of Paris are flocking out to see it.

The vessel is of a very elegant antique form, and I can give you on the Thames no better idea of it than by requesting you to fancy an

immense wherry, of which the stern has been cut straight off, and on which a temple on steps has been elevated. At the figure-head is an immense gold eagle, and at the stern is a little terrace, filled with evergreens and a profusion of banners. Upon pedestals along the sides of the vessel are tripods in which incense was burned, and underneath them are garlands of flowers called here "immortals." Four eagles surmount the temple, and a great scroll or garland, held in their beaks, surrounds it. It is hung with velvet and gold; four gold caryatides support the entry of it; and in the midst, upon a large platform hung with velvet, and bearing the imperial arms, stood the coffin. A steamboat, carrying two hundred musicians playing funereal marches and military symphonies, preceded this magnificent vessel to Courbevoie, where a funereal temple was erected, and "a statue of Notre Dame de Grâce, before which the seamen of the *Belle Poule* inclined themselves, in order to thank her for having granted them a noble and glorious voyage."

Early on the morning of the 15th December, amidst clouds of incense, and thunder of cannon, and innumerable shouts of people, the coffin was transferred from the barge, and carried by the seamen of the *Belle Poule* to the Imperial Car.

And now having conducted our hero almost to the gates of Paris, I must tell you what preparations were made in the capital to receive him.

Ten days before the arrival of the body, as you walked across the Deputies' Bridge, or over the Esplanade of the Invalides, you saw on the bridge eight, on the esplanade thirty-two, mysterious boxes erected, wherein a couple of score of sculptors were at work night and day.

In the middle of the Invalid Avenue, there used to stand, on a kind of shabby fountain or pump, a bust of Lafayette, crowned with some dirty wreaths of "immortals," and looking down at the little streamlet which occasionally dribbled below him. The spot of ground was now clear, and Lafayette and the pump had been consigned to some cellar, to make way for the mighty procession that was to pass over the place of their habitation.

Strange coincidence! If I had been Mr. Victor Hugo, my dear, or a poet of any note, I would, in a few hours, have made an impromptu concerning that Lafayette-crowned pump, and compared its lot now to the fortune of its patron some fifty years back. From him then issued, as from his fountain now, a feeble dribble of pure words; then, as now, some faint circle of disciples were willing to admire him. Certainly in the midst of the war and storm without, this pure fount of eloquence went dribbling, dribbling on, till of a sudden the revolutionary workmen knocked down statue and fountain, and the gorgeous imperial cavalcade trampled over the spot where they stood.

As for the Champs Elysées, there was no end to the preparations: the first day you saw a couple of hundred scaffoldings erected at intervals between the handsome gilded gas-lamps that at present ornament that avenue; next day, all these scaffoldings were filled with brick and mortar.

Presently, over the bricks and mortar rose pediments of statues, legs of urns, legs of goddesses, legs and bodies of goddesses, legs, bodies, and busts of goddesses. Finally, on the 13th December, goddesses complete. On the 14th, they were painted marble-colour; and the basements of wood and canvas on which they stood were made to resemble the same costly material. The funereal urns were ready to receive the frankincense and precious odours which were to burn in them. A vast number of white columns stretched down the avenue, each bearing a bronze buckler on which was written, in gold letters, one of the victories of the Emperor, and each decorated with enormous imperial flags. On these columns golden eagles were placed; and the newspapers did not fail to remark the ingenious position in which the royal birds had been set: for while those on the right-hand side of the way had their heads turned *towards* the procession, as if to watch its coming, those on the left were looking *exactly* the other way, as if to regard its progress. Do not fancy I am joking: this point was gravely and emphatically urged in many newspapers; and I do believe no mortal Frenchman ever thought it anything but sublime.

Do not interrupt me, sweet Miss Smith. I feel that you are angry. I can see from here the pouting of your lips, and know what you are going to say. You are going to say, "I will read no more of this Mr Titmarsh; there is no subject, however solemn, but he treats it with flippant irreverence, and no character, however great, at whom he does not sneer."

Ah, my dear! you are young now and enthusiastic; and your Titmarsh is old, very old, sad, and grey-headed. I have seen a poor mother buy a halfpenny wreath at the gate of Montmartre burying-ground, and go with it to her little child's grave, and hang it there over the little humble stone; and if ever you saw me scorn the mean offering of the poor shabby creature, I will give you leave to be as angry as you will. They say that on the passage of Napoleon's coffin down the Seine, old soldiers and country-people walked miles from their villages just to catch a sight of the boat which carried his body, and to kneel down on the shore and pray for him. God forbid that we should quarrel with such prayers and sorrow, or question their sincerity. Something great and good must have been in this man, something loving and kindly, that has kept his name so cherished in the popular memory, and gained him such lasting reverence and affection.

But, Madam, one may respect the dead without feeling awe-stricken at the plumes of the hearse; and I see no reason why one should sympathize with the train of mutes and undertakers, however deep may be their mourning. Look, I pray you, at the manner in which the French nation has performed Napoleon's funeral. Time out of mind, nations have raised, in memory of their heroes, august mausoleums, grand pyramids, splendid statues of gold or marble, sacrificing whatever they had that was most costly and rare, or that was most beautiful in art, as tokens of their respect and love for the dead person. What a fine example of this sort of sacrifice is that (recorded in a book of which Simplicity is the great cha-

racteristic) of the poor woman who brought her pot of precious ointment—her all, and laid it at the feet of the Object which, upon earth, she most loved and respected. “Economists and calculators” there were even in those days who quarrelled with the manner in which the poor woman lavished so much “capital;” but you will remember how nobly and generously the sacrifice was appreciated, and how the economists were put to shame.

With regard to the funeral ceremony that has just been performed here, it is said that a famous public personage and statesman, Monsieur Thiers indeed, spoke with the bitterest indignation of the general style of the preparations, and of their mean and tawdry character. He would have had a pomp as magnificent, he said, as that of Rome at the triumph of Aurelian: he would have decorated the bridges and avenues through which the procession was to pass, with the costliest marbles and the finest works of art, and have had them to remain there for ever as monuments of the great funeral.

The economists and calculators might here interpose with a great deal of reason (for, indeed, there was no reason why a nation should impoverish itself to do honour to the memory of an individual for whom, after all, it can feel but a qualified enthusiasm): but it surely might have employed the large sum voted for the purpose more wisely and generously, and recorded its respect for Napoleon by some worthy and lasting memorial, rather than have erected yonder thousand vain heaps of tinsel, paint, and plaster, that are already cracking and crumbling in the frost, at three days old.

Scarcely one of the statues, indeed, deserves to last a month: some are odious distortions and caricatures, which never should have been allowed to stand for a moment. On the very day of the fête, the wind was shaking the canvas pedestals, and the flimsy wood-work had begun to gape and give way. At a little distance, to be sure, you could not see the cracks, and pedestals and statues *looked* like marble. At some distance you could not tell but that the wreaths and eagles were gold embroidery, and not gilt paper—the great tricolour flags damask, and not striped calico. One would think that these sham splendours betokened sham respect, if one had not known that the name of Napoleon is held in real reverence, and observed somewhat of the character of the nation. Real feelings they have, but they distort them by exaggeration; real courage, which they render ludicrous by intolerable braggadocio; and I think the above official account of the Prince de Joinville's proceedings, of the manner in which the Emperor's remains have been treated in their voyage to the capital, and of the preparations made to receive him in it, will give, my dear Miss Smith, some means of understanding the social and moral condition of this worthy people of France.

III.—ON THE FUNERAL CEREMONY.

SHALL I tell you, my dear, that when François woke me at a very early hour on this eventful morning, while the keen stars were still glittering

overhead, a half-moon, as sharp as a razor, beaming in the frosty sky, and a wicked north wind blowing, that blew the blood out of one's fingers and froze your leg as you put it out of bed;—shall I tell you, my dear, that when François called me, and said, "*V'là vot' café, Monsieur Tite-masse, buvez-le, tiens, il est tout chaud,*" I felt myself, after imbibing the hot breakfast, so comfortable under three blankets and a mackintosh, that for at least a quarter-of-an-hour no man in Europe could say whether Titmarsh would or would not be present at the burial of the Emperor Napoleon.

Besides, my dear, the cold, there was another reason for doubting. Did the French nation, or did they not, intend to offer up some of us English over the imperial grave? And were the games to be concluded by a massacre? It was said in the newspapers that Lord Granville had despatched circulars to all the English resident in Paris, begging them to keep their homes. The French journals announced this news, and warned us charitably of the fate intended for us. Had Lord Granville written? Certainly not to me. Or had he written to all *except me*? And was I *the victim*—the doomed one?—to be seized directly I showed my face in the Champs Elysées, and torn in pieces by French Patriotism to the frantic chorus of the Marseillaise? Depend on it, Madam, that high and low in this city on Tuesday were not altogether at their ease, and that the bravest felt no small tremor. And be sure of this, that as his Majesty Louis Philippe took his nightcap off his royal head that morning, he prayed heartily that he might, at night, put it on in safety.

Well, as my companion and I came out of doors, being bound for the Church of the Invalides, for which a Deputy had kindly furnished us with tickets, we saw the very prettiest sight of the whole day, and I can't refrain from mentioning it to my dear tender-hearted Miss Smith.

In the same house where I live (but about five stories nearer the ground), lodges an English family, consisting of—1. A great-grandmother, a hale, handsome old lady of seventy, the very best-dressed and neatest old lady in Paris. 2. A grandfather and grandmother, tolerably young to bear that title. 3. A daughter. And 4. Two little great-grand, or grand children, that may be of the age of three and one, and belong to a son and daughter who are in India. The grandfather, who is as proud of his wife as he was thirty years ago when he married, and pays her compliments still twice or thrice in a day, and when he leads her into a room looks round at the persons assembled, and says in his heart, "Here, gentlemen here is my wife—show me such another woman in England,"—this gentleman had hired a room on the Champs Elysées, for he would not have his wife catch cold by exposing her to the balconies in the open air.

When I came to the street, I found the family assembled in the following order of march:—

- No. 1, the great-grandmother walking daintily along, supported by No. 3, her granddaughter.
- A nurse carrying No. 4 junior, who was sound asleep: and a huge basket

containing saucepans, bottles of milk, parcels of infants' food, certain dimity napkins, a child's coral, and a little horse belonging to No. 4 senior.

- A servant bearing a basket of condiments.
- No. 2, grandfather, spick and span, clean shaved, hat brushed, white buckskin gloves, bamboo cane, brown great-coat, walking as upright and solemn as may be, having his lady on his arm.
- No. 4 senior, with mottled legs and a tartan costume, who was frisking about between his grandpapa's legs, who heartily wished him at home.

"My dear," his face seemed to say to his lady, "I think you might have left the little things in the nursery, for we shall have to squeeze through a terrible crowd in the Champs Elysées."

The lady was going out for a day's pleasure, and her face was full of care: she had to look first after her old mother who was walking ahead, then after No. 4 junior with the nurse—he might fall into all sorts of danger, wake up, cry, catch cold, nurse might slip down, or heaven knows what. Then she had to look her husband in the face, who had gone to such expense and been so kind for her sake, and make that gentleman believe she was thoroughly happy; and, finally, she had to keep an eye upon No. 4 senior, who, as she was perfectly certain, was about in two minutes to be lost for ever or trampled to pieces in the crowd.

These events took place in a quiet little street leading into the Champs Elysées, the entry of which we had almost reached by this time. The four detachments above described, which had been straggling a little in their passage down the street, closed up at the end of it, and stood for a moment huddled together. No. 3, Miss X—, began speaking to her companion the great-grandmother.

"Hush, my dear," said that old lady, looking round alarmed at her daughter. "*Speak French.*" And she straightway began nervously to make a speech which she supposed to be in that language, but which was as much like French as Iroquois. The whole secret was out: you could read it in the grandmother's face, who was doing all she could to keep from crying, and looked as frightened as she dared to look. The two elder ladies had settled between them that there was going to be a general English slaughter that day, and had brought the children with them, so that they might all be murdered in company.

God bless you, O women, moist-eyed and tender-hearted! In those gentle silly tears of yours there is something touches one, be they never so foolish. I don't think there were many such natural drops shed that day as those which just made their appearance in the grandmother's eyes, and then went back again as if they had been ashamed of themselves, while the good lady and her little troop walked across the road. Think how happy she will be when night comes, and there has been no murder of English, and the brood is all nestled under her wings sound asleep, and she is lying awake, thanking God that the day and its pleasures and pains are over. Whilst we were considering these things, the grandfather had suddenly elevated No. 4 senior upon his left shoulder, and I saw the

tartan hat of that young gentleman, and the bamboo cane which had been transferred to him, high over the heads of the crowd on the opposite side through which the party moved.

After this little procession had passed away—you may laugh at it, but upon my word and conscience, Miss Smith, I saw nothing in the course of the day which affected me more—after this little procession had passed away, the other came, accompanied by gun-banging, flag-waving, incense-burning, trumpets pealing, drums rolling, and at the close, received by the voice of six hundred choristers, sweetly modulated to the tones of fifteen score of fiddlers. Then you saw horse and foot, jack-boots and bearskin, cuirass and bayonet, national guard and line, marshals and generals all over gold, smart aides-de-camp galloping about like mad, and high in the midst of all, riding on his golden buckler, Solomon in all his glory forsooth—Imperial Cæsar with his crown over his head, laurels and standards waving about his gorgeous chariot, and a million of people looking on in wonder and awe.

His Majesty the Emperor and King reclined on his shield, with his head a little elevated. His Majesty's skull is voluminous, his forehead broad and large. We remarked that his Imperial Majesty's brow was of a yellowish colour, which appearance was also visible about the orbits of the eyes. He kept his eyelids constantly closed, by which we had the opportunity of observing that the upper lids were garnished with eye-lashes. Years and climate have effected upon the face of this great monarch only a trifling alteration; we may say, indeed, that Time has touched his Imperial and Royal Majesty with the lightest feather in his wing. In the nose of the Conqueror of Austerlitz we remarked very little alteration: it is of the beautiful shape which we remember it possessed five-and-twenty years since, ere unfortunate circumstances induced him to leave us for a while. The nostril and the tube of the nose appear to have undergone some slight alteration, but in examining a beloved object the eye of affection is perhaps too critical. *Vive l'Empereur!* the soldier of Marengo is among us again. His lips are thinner, perhaps, than they were before! how white his teeth are! you can just see three of them pressing his under lip; and pray remark the fulness of his cheeks and the round contour of his chin. Oh, those beautiful white hands! many a time have they patted the cheek of poor Josephine, and played with the black ringlets of her hair. She is dead now and cold, poor creature; and so are Hortense and bold Eugene, "than whom the world never saw a curtier knight," as was said of King Arthur's Sir Lancelot. What a day would it have been for those three could they but have lived until now, and seen their hero returning! Where's Ney? His wife sits looking out from M. Flahaut's window yonder, but the bravest of the brave is not with her. Murat too is absent: honest Joachim loves the Emperor at heart, and repents that he was not at Waterloo: who knows but that at the sight of the handsome swordsman those stubborn English 'canaille'

would have given way? A king, sire, is, you know, the greatest of slaves—State affairs of consequence—his Majesty the King of Naples is detained no doubt. When we last saw the King, however, and his Highness the Prince of Elchingen, they looked to have as good health as ever they had in their lives, and we heard each of them calmly calling out “Fire!” as they have done in numberless battles before.

Is it possible? can the Emperor forget? We don’t like to break it to him, but has he forgotten all about the farm at Pizzo, and the garden of the Observatory? Yes, truly: there he lies on his golden shield, never stirring, never so much as lifting his eyelids, or opening his lips any wider.

O vanitas vanitatum! Here is our Sovereign in all his glory, and they fired a thousand guns at Cherbourg and never woke him!

However, we are advancing matters by several hours, and you must give just as much credence as you please to the subjoined remarks concerning the Procession, seeing that your humble servant could not possibly be present at it, being bound for the church elsewhere.

Programmes, however, have been published of the affair, and your vivid fancy will not fail to give life to them, and the whole magnificent train will pass before you.

Fancy then, that the guns are fired at Neuilly: the body landed at daybreak from the funereal barge, and transferred to the *car*; and fancy the car, a huge Juggernaut of a machine, rolling on four wheels of an antique shape, which supported a basement adorned with golden eagles, banners, laurels, and velvet hangings. Above the hangings stand twelve golden statues with raised arms supporting a huge shield, on which the coffin lay. On the coffin was the imperial crown, covered with violet velvet crape, and the whole vast machine was drawn by horses in superb housings, led by valets in the imperial livery.

Fancy at the head of the procession first of all—

The Gendarmerie of the Seine, with their trumpets and Colonel.

The Municipal Guard (horse), with their trumpets, standard, and Colonel.

Two squadrons of the 7th Lancers, with Colonel, standard, and music.

The Commandant of Paris and his Staff

A battalion of Infantry of the Line, with their flag, sappers, drums, music, and Colonel.

The Municipal Guard (foot), with flag, drums, and Colonel.

The Sapper-pumpers, with ditto.

Then picture to yourself more squadrons of Lancers and Cuirassiers. The General of the Division, and his Staff; all officers of all arms employed at Paris, and unattached; the Military School of Saint Cyr, the Polytechnic School, the School of the *Etat-Major*; and the Professors and Staff of each. Go on imagining more battalions of Infantry, of Artillery, companies of Engineers, squadrons of Cuirassiers, ditto of the Cavalry, of the National Guard, and the first and second legions of ditto.

Fancy a carriage, containing the Chaplain of the St. Helena expedition, the only clerical gentleman that formed a part of the procession.

Fancy you hear the funereal music, and then figure in your mind’s eye—

THE EMPEROR'S CHARGER, that is, Napoleon's own saddle and bridle (when First Consul) upon a white horse. The saddle (which has been kept ever since in the Garde Meuble of the Crown) is of amaranth velvet, embroidered in gold: the holsters and housings are of the same rich material. On them you remark the attributes of War, Commerce, Science, and Art. The bits and stirrups are silver-gilt chased. Over the stirrups, two eagles were placed at the time of the empire; the horse was covered with a violet crape embroidered with golden bees.

After this, came more Soldiers, General Officers, Sub-Officers, Marshals, and what was said to be the prettiest sight almost of the whole, the banners of the eighty-six Departments of France. These are due to the invention of M. Thiers, and were to have been accompanied by federates from each Department. But the Government very wisely mistrusted this and some other projects of Monsieur Thiers, and as for a federation, my dear, it has been tried. Next comes—

His Royal Highness the Prince de Joinville.

The 500 sailors of the *Belle Poule* marching in double files on each side of

THE CAR.

[Hush! the enormous crowd thrills as it passes, and only some few voices cry *Vive l'Empereur*. Shining golden in the frosty sun—with hundreds of thousands of eyes upon it, from houses and housetops, from balconies, black, purple, and tricolor, from tops of leafless trees, from behind long lines of glittering bayonets under schakos and bearskin caps, from behind the Line and the National Guard again, pushing, struggling, heaving, panting, eager, the heads of an enormous multitude stretching out to meet and follow it, amidst long avenues of columns and statues gleaming white, of standards rainbow-coloured, of golden eagles, of pale funeral urns, of discharging odours amidst huge volumes of pitch-black smoke,

THE GREAT IMPERIAL CHARIOT

ROLLS MAJESTICALLY ON.

The cords of the pall are held by two Marshals, an Admiral, and General

Bertrand; who are followed by—

The Prefects of the Seine and Police, &c.

The Mayors of Paris, &c.

The Members of the Old Guard, &c.

A Squadron of Light Dragoons, &c.

Lieutenant-General Schneider, &c.

More cavalry, more infantry, more artillery, more everybody; and as the procession passes, the Line and the National Guard forming line on each side of the road fall in and follow it, until it arrives at the Church of the Invalides, where the last honours are to be paid to it.

Among the company assembled under the dome of that edifice, the casual observer would not perhaps have remarked a gentleman of the name of Michael Angelo Titmarsh, who nevertheless was there. But as, my dear Miss Smith, the descriptions in this letter, from the words in page 69, line 3—the party moved—up to the words paid to it, in the last period, have purely emanated from your obedient servant's fancy, and not from his personal observation (for no being on earth, except a newspaper reporter, can be in two places at once), permit me now to communicate to you what little circumstances fell under my own particular view on the day of the 15th of December.

As we came out, the air and the buildings round about were tinged with purple, and the clear sharp half-moon before-mentioned was still in the sky, where it seemed to be lingering as if it would catch a peep of the commencement of the famous procession. The Arc de Triomphe was shining in a keen frosty sunshine, and looking as clean and rosy as if it had just made its toilette. The canvas or pasteboard image of Napoleon, of which only the gilded legs had been erected the night previous, was now visible, body, head, crown, sceptre and all, and made an imposing show. Long gilt banners were flaunting about, with the imperial cipher and eagle, and the names of the battles and victories glittering in gold. The long avenues of the Champs Elysées had been covered with sand for the convenience of the great procession that was to tramp across it that day. Hundreds of people were marching to and fro, laughing, chattering, singing, gesticulating as happy Frenchmen do. There is no pleasanter sight than a French crowd on the alert for a festival, and nothing more catching than their good-humour. As for the notion which has been put forward by some of the opposition newspapers that the populace were on this occasion unusually solemn or sentimental, it would be paying a bad compliment to the natural gaiety of the nation, to say that it was, on the morning at least of the 15th of December, affected in any such absurd way. Itinerant merchants were shouting out lustily their commodities of segars and brandy, and the weather was so bitter cold, that they could not fail to find plenty of customers. Carpenters and workmen were still making a huge banging and clattering among the sheds which were built for the accommodation of the visitors. Some of these sheds were hung with black, such as one sees before churches in funerals; some were robed in violet, in compliment to the Emperor whose mourning they put on. Most of them had fine tricolour hangings with appropriate inscriptions to the glory of the French arms.

All along the Champs Elysées were urns of plaster-of-Paris destined to contain funeral incense and flames: columns decorated with huge flags of blue, red, and white, embroidered with shining crowns, eagles, and N's in gilt paper, and statues of plaster representing Nymphs, Triumphs, Victories, or other female personages, painted in oil so as to represent marble. Real marble could have had no better effect, and the appearance of the whole was lively and picturesque in the extreme. On each pillar was a buckler of the colour of bronze, bearing the name and date of a battle in gilt letters: you had to walk through a mile-long avenue of these glorious reminiscences, telling of spots where, in the great imperial days, throats had been victoriously cut.

As we passed down the avenue, several troops of soldiers met us: the *garde-municipale à cheval*, in brass helmets and shining jack-boots, noble-looking men, large, on large horses, the pick of the old army, as I have heard, and armed for the special occupation of peace-keeping: not the most glorious, but the best part of the soldier's duty, as I fancy. Then came a regiment of Carabineers, one of Infantry—little, alert, brown-faced, good-

humoured men, their band at their head playing sounding marches. These were followed by a regiment or detachment of the Municipals on foot—two or three inches taller than the men of the Line, and conspicuous for their neatness and discipline. By-and-by came a squadron or so of dragoons of the National Guards : they are covered with straps, buckles, aiguillettes, and cartouche-boxes, and made under their tricolour cock's-plumes a show sufficiently warlike. The point which chiefly struck me on beholding these military men of the National Guard and the Line, was the admirable manner in which they bore a cold that seemed to me as sharp as the weather in the Russian retreat, through which cold the troops were trotting without trembling and in the utmost cheerfulness and good-humour. An aide-de-camp galloped past in white pantaloons. By heavens ! it made me shudder to look at him.

With this profound reflection, we turned away to the right towards the hanging-bridge (where we met a detachment of young men of the Ecole de l'Etat Major, fine-looking lads, but sadly disfigured by the wearing of stays or belts, that make the waists of the French dandies of a most absurd tenuity), and speedily passed into the avenue of statues leading up to the Invalides. All these were statues of warriors from Ney to Charlemagne, modelled in clay for the nonce, and placed here to meet the corpse of the greatest warrior of all. Passing these, we had to walk to a little door at the back of the Invalides, where was a crowd of persons plunged in the deepest mourning, and pushing for places in the chapel within.

The chapel is spacious and of no great architectural pretensions, but was on this occasion gorgeously decorated in honour of the great person to whose body it was about to give shelter.

We had arrived at nine : the ceremony was not to begin, they said, till two : we had five hours before us to see all that from our places could be seen.

We saw that the roof, up to the first lines of architecture, was hung with violet ; beyond this with black. We saw N.'s, eagles, bees, laurel wreaths, and other such imperial emblems, adorning every nook and corner of the edifice. Between the arches, on each side of the aisle, were painted trophies, on which were written the names of some of Napoleon's Generals and of their principal deeds of arms—and not their deeds of arms alone, *pardi*, but their coats of arms too. O stars and garters ! but this is too much. What was Ney's paternal coat, prythee, or honest Junot's quarterings, or the venerable escutcheon of King Joachim's father, the innkeeper ?

You and I, dear Miss Smith, know the exact value of heraldic bearings. We know that though the greatest pleasure of all is to *act* like a gentleman, it is a pleasure, nay a merit, to *be* one—to come of an old stock, to have an honourable pedigree, to be able to say that centuries back our fathers had gentle blood, and to us transmitted the same. There is a good in gentility : the man who questions it is envious, or a coarse

dullard, not able to perceive the difference between high breeding and low. One has in the same way heard a man brag that he did not know the difference between wines, not he—give him a good glass of port and he would pitch all your claret to the deuce. My love, men often brag about their own dulness in this way.

In the matter of gentlemen, democrats cry, "Psha! Give us one of Nature's gentlemen, and hang your aristocrats." And so indeed Nature does make *some* gentlemen—a few here and there. But Art makes most. Good birth, that is, good handsome well-formed fathers and mothers, nice cleanly nursery-maids, good meals, good physicians, good education, few cares, pleasant easy habits of life, and luxuries not too great or enervating, but only refining—a course of these going on for a few generations are the best gentlemen-makers in the world, and beat Nature hollow.

If, respected Madam, you say that there is something *better* than gentility in this wicked world, and that honesty and personal worth are more valuable than all the politeness and high breeding that ever wore red-heeled pumps, knights' spurs, or Hoby's boots, Tutmarah for one is never going to say you nay. If you *even* go so far as to say that the very existence of this super-genteel society among us, from the *skivvish* respect that we pay to it, from the dastardly manner in which we attempt to imitate its airs and ape its vices, goes far to destroy honesty of intercourse, to make us nicely ashamed of our natural affections and honest, harmless usages, and so does a great deal more harm than it is possible it can do good by its example—perhaps, Madam, you speak with *some* sort of reason. Potato myself, I can't help seeing that the tulip yonder has the best place in the garden, and the most sunshine, and the most water, and the best tending—and not liking him over well. But I can't help acknowledging that Nature has given him a much finer dress than ever I can hope to have, and of this, at least must give him the benefit.

Or say, we are so many cocks and hens, my dear (*sans arrière pensée*), with our crops pretty full, our plumes pretty sleek, decent picking here and there in the straw-yard, and tolerable snug roosting in the barn: yonder on the terrace, in the sun, walks Peacock, stretching his proud neck, squealing every now and then in the most pert fashionable voice and flaunting his great supercilious dandified tail. Don't let us be too angry, my dear, with the useless, haughty, insolent creature, because he despises us. *Somethung* is there about Peacock that we don't possess. Strain your neck ever so, you can't make it as long or as blue as his—cock your tail as much as you please, and it will never be half so fine to look at. But the most absurd, disgusting, contemptible sight in the world would you and I be, leaving the barn-door for my lady's flower garden, forsaking our natural sturdy walk for the peacock's genteel rickety stride, and adopting the squeak of his voice in the place of our gallant lusty cock-a-doodle-dooing.

Do you take the allegory? I love to speak in such, and the above

types have been presented to my mind while sitting opposite a gimcrack coat-of-arms and coronet that are painted in the Invalides Church, and assigned to one of the Emperor's Generals.

Ventrebleu! Madam, what need have they of coats-of-arms and coronets, and wretched imitations of old exploded aristocratic gewgaws that they had flung out of the country—with the heads of the owners in them sometimes, for indeed they were not particular—a score of years before? What business, forsooth, had they to be meddling with gentility and aping its ways, who had courage, merit, daring, genius sometimes, and a pride of their own to support, if proud they were inclined to be? A clever young man (who was not of high family himself, but had been bred up genteelly at Eton and the university)—young Mr. George Canning, at the commencement of the French Revolution, sneered at “Roland the Just, with ribbons in his shoes,” and the dandies who then wore buckles, voted the sarcasm monstrous killing. It was a joke, my dear, worthy of a lackey, or of a silly smart parvenu, not knowing the society into which his luck had cast him (God help him! in later years, they taught him what they were!), and fancying in his silly intoxication that simplicity was ludicrous and fashion respectable. See, now, fifty years are gone, and where are shoebuckles? Extinct, defunct, kicked into the irrevocable past off the toes of all Europe!

How fatal to the parvenu, throughout history, has been this respect for shoebuckles. Where, for instance, would the Empire of Napoleon have been, if Ney and Lannes had never sported such a thing as a coat-of-arms, and had only written their simple names on their shields, after the fashion of Desaix's scutcheon yonder?—the bold republican who led the crowning charge at Marengo, and sent the best blood of the Holy Roman Empire to the right-about, before the wretched misbegotten imperial heraldry was born, that was to prove so disastrous to the father of it. It has always been so. They won't amalgamate. A country must be governed by the one principle or the other. But give, in a republic, an aristocracy ever so little chance, and it works and plots and sneaks and bullies and sneers itself into place, and you find democracy out of doors. Is it good that the aristocracy should so triumph?—that is a question that you may settle according to your own notions and taste; and permit me to say, I do not care twopence how you settle it. Large books have been written upon the subject in a variety of languages, and coming to a variety of conclusions. Great statesmen are there in our country, from Lord Londonderry down to Mr. Vincent, each in his degree maintaining his different opinion. But here, in the matter of Napoleon, is a simple fact: he founded a great, glorious, strong, potent republic, able to cope with the best aristocracies in the world, and perhaps to beat them all; he converts his republic into a monarchy, and surrounds his monarchy with what he calls aristocratic institutions; and you know what becomes of him. The people estranged, the aristocracy faithless (when did they ever pardon one who was not of themselves?)—the imperial fabric

tumbles to the ground. If it teaches nothing else, my dear, it teaches one a great point of policy—namely, to stick by one's party.

While these thoughts (and sundry others relative to the horrible cold of the place, the intense dulness of delay, the stupidity of leaving a warm bed and a breakfast in order to witness a procession that is much better performed at a theatre)—while these thoughts were passing in the mind, the church began to fill apace, and you saw that the hour of the ceremony was drawing near.

Imprimis, came men with lighted staves, and set fire to at least ten thousand of wax-candles that were hanging in brilliant chandeliers in various parts of the chapel. Curtains were dropped over the upper windows as these illuminations were effected, and the church was left only to the funereal light of the spermaceti. To the right was the dome, round the cavity of which sparkling lamps were set, that designed the shape of it brilliantly against the darkness. In the midst, and where the altar used to stand, rose the catafalque. And why not? Who is God here but Napoleon? and in him the sceptics have already ceased to believe; but the people does still somewhat. He and Louis XIV. divide the worship of the place between them.

As for the catafalque, the best that I can say for it is that it is really a noble and imposing-looking edifice, with tall pillars supporting a grand dome, with innumerable escutcheons, standards, and allusions military and funereal. A great eagle of course tops the whole: tripods burning spirits of wine stand round this kind of dead-man's throne, and as we saw it (by peering over the heads of our neighbours in the front rank), it looked, in the midst of the black concave, and under the effect of half-a-thousand flashing cross-lights, properly grand and tall. The effect of the whole chapel, however (to speak the jargon of the painting-room), was spoiled by being *cut up*; there were too many objects for the eye to rest upon; the ten thousand wax candles, for instance, in their numberless twinkling chandeliers, the raw *tranchant* colours of the new banners, wreaths, becs, N.'s, and other emblems dotting the place all over, and incessantly puzzling, or rather *bothering* the beholder.

High overhead, in a sort of mist, with the glare of their original colours worn down by dust and time, hung long rows of dim ghostly-looking standards, captured in old days from the enemy. They were, I thought, the best and most solemn part of the show.

To suppose that the people were bound to be solemn during the ceremony is to exact from them something quite needless and unnatural. The very fact of a squeeze dissipates all solemnity. One great crowd is always, as I imagine, pretty much like another. In the course of the last few years I have seen three: that attending the coronation of our present sovereign, that which went to see Courvoisier hanged, and this which witnessed the Napoleon ceremony. The people so assembled for hours together are jocular rather than solemn, seeking to pass away the weary time with the best amusements that will offer. There was, to be sure, in

all the scenes above alluded to, just one moment—one particular moment—when the universal people feels a shock and is for that second serious.

But except for that second of time, I declare I saw no seriousness here beyond that of ennui. The church began to fill with personages of all ranks and conditions. First, opposite our seats came a company of fat grenadiers of the National Guard, who presently, at the word of command, put their muskets down against benches and wainscots, until the arrival of the procession. For seven hours these men formed the object of the most anxious solicitude of all the ladies and gentlemen seated on our benches: they began to stamp their feet, for the cold was atrocious, and we were frozen where we sate. Some of them fell to blowing their fingers; one executed a kind of dance, such as one sees often here in cold weather—the individual jumps repeatedly upon one leg, and kicks out the other violently, meanwhile his hands are flapping across his chest. Some fellows opened their cartouche-boxes, and from them drew eatables of various kinds. You can't think how anxious we were to know the qualities of the same. "Tiens, ce gros qui mange une cuisse de volaille!"—"Il a du jambon, celui-là." "I should like some, too," growls an Englishman, "for I hadn't a morsel of breakfast," and so on. This is the way, my dear, that we see Napoleon buried.

Did you ever see a chicken escape from clown in a pantomime, and hop over into the pit, or amongst the fiddlers? and have you not seen the shrieks of enthusiastic laughter that the wondrous incident occasions? We had our chicken, of course: there never was a public crowd without one. A poor unhappy woman in a greasy plaid cloak, with a battered rose-coloured plush bonnet, was seen taking her place among the stalls allotted to the grandees. "Voyez donc l'Anglaise," said everybody, and it was too true. You could swear that the wretch was an Englishwoman—a bonnet was never made or worn so in any other country. Half-an-hour's delightful amusement did this lady give us all. She was whisked from seat to seat by the *huissiers*, and at every change of place woke a peal of laughter. I was glad, however, at the end of the day to see the old pink bonnet over a very comfortable seat, which somebody had not claimed and she had kept.

Are not these remarkable incidents? The next wonder we saw was the arrival of a set of tottering old Invalids, who took their places under us with drawn sabres. Then came a superb drum-major, a handsome smiling good-humoured giant of a man, his breeches astonishingly embroidered with silver lace. Him a dozen little drummer-boys followed—"the little darlings!" all the ladies cried out in a breath: they were indeed pretty little fellows, and came and stood close under us: the huge drum-major smiled over his little red-capped flock, and for many hours in the most perfect contentment twiddled his moustaches and played with the tassels of his cane.

Now the company began to arrive thicker and thicker. A whole covey of *Conseillers-d'Etat* came in, in blue coats, embroidered with blue silk:

then came a crowd of lawyers in toques and caps, among whom were sundry venerable Judges in scarlet, purple velvet, and ermine—a kind of Bajazet costume. Look there! there is the Turkish Ambassador in his red cap, turning his solemn brown face about and looking preternaturally wise. The Deputies walk in in a body. Guizot is not there: he passed by just now in full ministerial costume. Presently little Thiers saunters back: what a clear, broad, sharp-eyed face the fellow has, with his grey hair cut down so demure! A servant passes, pushing through the crowd a shabby wheel-chair. It has just brought old Moncey, the Governor of the Invalids, the honest old man who defended Paris so stoutly in 1814. He has been very ill, and is worn down almost by infirmities: but in his illness he was perpetually asking, "Doctor, shall I live till the 15th? Give me till then, and I die contented." One can't help believing that the old man's wish is honest, however one may doubt the piety of another illustrious Marshal, who once carried a candle before Charles X. in a procession, and has been this morning to Neuilly to kneel and pray at the foot of Napoleon's coffin. He might have said his prayers at home, to be sure, but don't let us ask too much; that kind of reserve is not a Frenchman's characteristic.

Bang—bang! At about half-past two a dull sound of cannonading was heard without the church, and signals took place between the Commandant of the Invalids, of the National Guards, and the big drum-major. Looking to these troops (the fat Nationals were shuffling into line again) the two Commandants uttered, as nearly as I could catch them, the following words—

"HAREUM HUMP!"

At once all the National bayonets were on the present, and the sabres of the old Invalids up. The big drum-major looked round at the children, who began very slowly and solemnly on their drums, Rub-dub-dub—rub-dub-dub—(count two between each)—rub-dub-dub, and a great procession of priests came down from the altar.

First, there was a tall handsome cross-bearer, bearing a long gold cross, of which the front was turned towards his grace the Archbishop. Then came a double row of about sixteen incense boys, dressed in white surplices: the first boy, about six years old, the last with whiskers and of the height of man. Then followed a regiment of priests in black tippets and white gowns: they had black hoods, like the moon when she is at her third quarter, wherewith those who were bald (many were, and fat too) covered themselves. All the reverend men held their heads meekly down, and affected to be reading in their breviaries.

After the Priests came some Bishops of the neighboring districts, in purple, with crosses sparkling on their episcopal bosoms.

Then came, after more priests, a set of men whom I have never seen before—a kind of ghostly heralds, young and handsome men, some of them in stiff tabards of black and silver, their eyes to the ground, their hands placed at right angles with their chests.

Then came two gentlemen bearing remarkable tall candlesticks, with candles of corresponding size. One was burning brightly, but the wind (that chartered libertine) had blown out the other, which nevertheless kept its place in the procession—I wondered to myself whether the reverend gentleman who carried the extinguished candle, felt disgusted, humiliated, mortified—perfectly conscious that the eyes of many thousands of people were bent upon that bit of refractory wax. We all of us looked at it with intense interest.

Another cross-bearer, behind whom came a gentleman carrying an instrument like a bedroom candlestick.

His Grandeur Monseigneur Affre, Archbishop of Paris: he was in black and white, his eyes were cast to the earth, his hands were together at right angles from his chest: on his hands were black gloves, and on the black gloves sparkled the sacred episcopal—what do I say?—archiepiscopal ring. On his head was the mitre. It is unlike the godly coronet that figures upon the coach-panels of our own Right Reverend Bench. The Archbishop's mitre may be about a yard high: formed within probably of consecrated pasteboard, it is without covered by a sort of watered silk of white and silver. On the two peaks at the top of the mitre are two very little spangled tassels, that frisk and twinkle about in a very agreeable manner.

Monseigneur stood opposite to us for some time, when I had the opportunity to note the above remarkable phenomena. He stood opposite me for some time, keeping his eyes steadily on the ground, his hands before him, a small clerical train following after. Why didn't they move? There was the National Guard keeping on presenting arms, the little drummers going on rub-dub-dub—rub-dub-dub—in the same steady, slow way, and the Procession never moved an inch. There was evidently, to use an elegant phrase, a hitch somewhere.

[Enter a fat priest, who bustles up to the drum-major.]

Fat priest—"Taisez-vous."

Little drummer—Rub-dub-dub—rub-dub-dub—rub-dub-dub, &c.

Drum-major—"Qu'est-ce donc?"

Fat priest—"Taisez-vous, vous dis-je; ce n'est pas le corps. Il n'arrivera pas—pour une heure."

The little drums were instantly hushed, the procession turned to the right about, and walked back to the altar again, the blown-out candle that had been on the near side of us before was now on the off side, the National Guards set down their muskets and began at their sandwiches again. We had to wait an hour and a half at least before the great procession arrived. The guns without went on booming all the while at intervals, and as we heard each, the audience gave a kind of "ahahah!" such as you hear when the rockets go up at Vauxhall.

At last the real Procession came.

Then the drums began to beat as formerly, the Nationals to get under arms, the clergymen were sent for and went, and presently—yes

there was the tall cross-bearer at the head of the procession, and they came back !

They chanted something in a weak, snuffling, lugubrious manner, to the melancholy bray of a serpent.

Crash ! however. Mr. Habeneck and the fiddlers in the organ-loft pealed out a wild shrill march, which stopped the reverend gentlemen, and in the midst of this music—

And of a great trampling of feet and clattering,
And of a great crowd of Generals and Officers in fine clothes,
With the Prince de Joinville marching quickly at the head of the procession,

And while everybody's heart was thumping as hard as possible,

NAPOLEON'S COFFIN PASSED.

It was done in an instant. A box covered with a great red cross—a dingy-looking crown lying on the top of it—Seamen on one side and Invalids on the other—they had passed in an instant and were up the aisle.

A faint snuffling sound, as before, was heard from the officiating priests, but we knew of nothing more. It is said that old Louis Philippe was standing at the catafalque, whither the Prince de Joinville advanced and said, "Sire, I bring you the body of the Emperor Napoleon."

Louis Philippe answered, "I receive it in the name of France." Bertrand put on the body the most glorious victorious sword that ever has been forged since the apt descendants of the first murderer learned how to hammer steel ; and the coffin was placed in the temple prepared for it.

The six hundred singers and the fiddlers now commenced the playing and singing of a piece of music ; and a part of the crew of the *Belle Poule* skipped into the places that had been kept for them under us, and listened to the music, chewing tobacco. While the actors and fiddlers were going on, most of the spirits-of-wine lamps on altars went out.

When we arrived in the open air we passed through the court of the Invalides, where thousands of people had been assembled, but where the benches were now quite bare. Then we came on to the terrace before the place : the old soldiers were firing off the great guns, which made a dreadful stunning noise, and frightened some of us, who did not care to pass before the cannon and be knocked down even by the wadding. The guns were fired in honour of the King, who was going home by a back door. All the forty thousand people who covered the great stands before the Hôtel had gone away too. The Imperial Barge had been dragged up the river, and was lying lonely along the Quay, examined by some few shivering people on the shore.

It was five o'clock when we reached home : the stars were shining keenly out of the frosty sky, and François told me that dinner was just ready.

In this manner, my dear Miss Smith, the great Napoleon was buried.
Farewell.



A CLIENT FOR MR PEDDIE

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BOOK THE FOURTH.

CHAPTER XI.

LOVE AND LAW.



ON the morning of Monday, the twenty-eighth of July, Miss Gwilt—once more on the watch for Allan and Neelie—reached her customary post of observation in the park, by the usual roundabout way.

She was a little surprised to find Neelie alone at the place of meeting. She was more seriously astonished, when the tardy Allan made his appearance ten minutes later, to see him mounting the side of the dell, with a large volume under his arm, and to hear him say, as an apology for being late, that "he had muddled away his time in hunting for the Books; and that he had only found one, after all, which seemed in the least likely to repay either Neelie or himself for the trouble of looking into it."

If Miss Gwilt had waited long enough in the park, on the previous Saturday, to hear the lovers' parting words on that occasion, she would have been at no loss to explain the mystery of the volume under Allan's arm, and she would have understood the apology which he now offered for being late, as readily as Neelie herself.

There is a certain exceptional occasion in life—the occasion of marriage—on which even girls in their teens sometimes become capable (more or less hysterically) of looking at consequences. At the farewell moment of the interview on Saturday, Neelie's mind had suddenly pre-

capitated itself into the future ; and she had utterly confounded Allan by inquiring whether the contemplated elopement was an offence punishable by the Law ? Her memory satisfied her that she had certainly read somewhere, at some former period, in some book or other (possibly a novel), of an elopement with a dreadful end—of a bride dragged home in hysterics—and of a bridegroom sentenced to languish in prison, with all his beautiful hair cut off, by Act of Parliament, close to his head. Supposing she could bring herself to consent to the elopement at all—which she positively declined to promise—she must first insist on discovering whether there was any fear of the police being concerned in her marriage as well as the parson and the clerk. Allan being a man, ought to know ; and to Allan she looked for information—with this preliminary assurance to assist him in laying down the law, that she would die of a broken heart a thousand times over, rather than be the innocent means of sending him to languish in prison, and of cutting his hair off, by Act of Parliament, close to his head. “It’s no laughing matter,” said Neelie resolutely, in conclusion ; “I decline even to think of our marriage, till my mind is made easy first on the subject of the Law.”

“But I don’t know anything about the law, not even as much as you do,” said Allan. “Hang the law ! I don’t mind my head being cropped. Let’s risk it.”

“Risk it ?” repeated Neelie, indignantly. “Have ~~you~~ no consideration for *me* ? I won’t risk it ! Where there’s a will, there’s a way. We must find out the law for ourselves.”

“With all my heart,” said Allan. “How ?”

“Out of books, to be sure ! There must be quantities of information in that enormous library of yours at the great house. If you really love me, you won’t mind going over the backs of a few thousand books, for my sake !”

“I’ll go over the backs of ten thousand !” cried Allan, warmly. “Would you mind telling me what I’m to look for ?”

“For ‘Law,’ to be sure ! When it says ‘Law’ on the back, open it, and look inside for Marriage—read every word of it—and then come here and explain it to me. What ? you don’t think your head is to be trusted to do such a simple thing as that ?”

“I’m certain it isn’t,” said Allan. “Can’t you help me ?”

“Of course I can, if you can’t manage without me ! Law may be hard, but it can’t be harder than music ; and I must, and will, satisfy my mind. Bring me all the books you can find, on Monday morning—in a wheelbarrow, if there are a good many of them, and if you can’t manage it in any other way.”

The result of this conversation was Allan’s appearance in the park, with a volume of Blackstone’s Commentaries under his arm, on the fatal Monday morning, when Miss Gwilt’s written engagement of marriage was placed in Midwinter’s hands. Here again, in this, as in all other human instances, the widely discordant elements of the grotesque and the terrible

were forced together by that subtle law of contrast which is one of the laws of mortal life. Amid all the thickening complications now impending over their heads—with the shadow of meditated murder stealing towards one of them already, from the lurking-place that hid Miss Gwilt—the two sat down, unconscious of the future, with the book between them; and applied themselves to the study of the law of marriage, with a grave resolution to understand it, which, in two such students, was nothing less than a burlesque in itself!

"Find the place," said Neelie, as soon as they were comfortably established. "We must manage this, by what they call a division of labour. You shall read—and I'll take notes."

She produced forthwith a smart little pocket-book and pencil, and opened the book in the middle, where there was a blank page on the right hand and the left. At the top of the right-hand page, she wrote the word, *Good*. At the top of the left-hand page, she wrote the word, *Bad*. "'Good' means where the law is on our side," she explained; "and 'Bad' means where the law is against us. We will have 'Good' and 'Bad' opposite each other, all down the two pages; and when we get to the bottom, we'll add them up, and act accordingly. They say girls have no heads for business. Haven't they! Don't look at me—look at Blackstone, and begin."

"Would you mind giving me a kiss first?" asked Allan.

"I should mind it very much. In our serious situation, when we have both got to exert our intellects, I wonder you can ask for such a thing!"

"That's why I asked for it," said the unblushing Allan. "I feel as if it would clear my head."

"Oh, if it would clear your head, that's quite another thing! I must clear your head, of course, at any sacrifice. Only one, mind," she whispered coquettishly; "and pray be careful of Blackstone, or you'll lose the place."

There was a pause in the conversation. Blackstone and the pocket-book both rolled on the ground together.

"If this happens again," said Neelie, picking up the pocket-book, with her eyes and her complexion at their brightest and best, "I shall sit with my back to you for the rest of the morning. Will you go on?"

Allan found his place for the second time, and fell headlong into the bottomless abyss of the English Law.

"Page two-hundred-and-eighty," he began. "Law of husband and wife. Here's a bit I don't understand, to begin with:—'It may be observed generally, that the law considers marriage in the light of a Contract.' What does that mean? I thought a contract was the sort of thing a builder signs, when he promises to have the workmen out of the house in a given time, and when the time comes (as my poor mother used to say) the workmen never go."

"Is there nothing about Love?" asked Neelie. "Look a little lower down."

"Not a word. He sticks to his confounded 'Contract,' all the way through."

"Then he's a brute! Go on to something else that's more in our way."

"Here's a bit that's more in our way:—'Incapacities. If any persons under legal incapacities come together, it is a meretricious, and not a matrimonial union.' (Blackstone's a good one at long words, isn't he? I wonder what he means by meretricious?) 'The first of these legal disabilities is a prior marriage, and having another husband or wife living——'"

"Stop!" said Neelie. "I must make a note of that." She gravely made her first entry on the page headed "Good," as follows:—"I have no husband, and Allan has no wife. We are both entirely unmarried at the present time."

"All right, so far," remarked Allan, looking over her shoulder.

"Go on," said Neelie. "What next?"

"The next disability," proceeded Allan, "'is want of age. The age for consent to matrimony is, fourteen in males, and twelve in females.' Come!" cried Allan cheerfully, "Blackstone begins early enough at any rate!"

Neelie was too business-like to make any other remark, on her side, than the necessary remark in the pocket-book. She made another entry under the head of "Good:—"I am old enough to consent, and so is Allan too. Go on," resumed Neelie, looking over the reader's shoulder. "Never mind all that prosing of Blackstone's, about the husband being of years of discretion, and the wife under twelve. Abominable wretch! the wife under twelve! Skip to the third incapacity, if there is one."

"The third incapacity," Allan went on, "is want of reason."

Neelie immediately made a third entry on the side of "Good:—"Allan and I are both perfectly reasonable—skip to the next page."

Allan skipped. "A fourth incapacity is in respect of proximity of relationship."

A fourth entry followed instantly on the cheering side of the pocket-book:—"He loves me and I love him—without our being in the slightest degree related to each other. Any more?" asked Neelie, tapping her chin impatiently with the end of the pencil.

"Plenty more," rejoined Allan; "all in hieroglyphics. Look here: 'Marriage Acts, 4 Geo. iv. c. 76, and 6 and 7 Will. iv. c. 85 (g).' Blackstone's intellect seems to be wandering here. Shall we take another skip, and see if he picks himself up again on the next page."

"Wait a little," said Neelie; "what's that I see in the middle?" She read for a minute in silence, over Allan's shoulder, and suddenly clasped her hands in despair. "I knew I was right!" she exclaimed. "Oh, heavens, here it is!"

"Where?" asked Allan. "I see nothing about languishing in prison,

and cropping a fellow's hair close to his head, unless it's in the hieroglyphics. Is '4 Geo. iv.' short for 'Lock him up?' and does 'c. 85 (q)' mean, 'Send for the hair-cutter?'"

"Pray be serious," remonstrated Neelie. "We are both sitting on a volcano. There!" she said, pointing to the place. "Read it! If anything can bring you to a proper sense of our situation, *that* will."

Allan cleared his throat, and Neelie held the point of her pencil ready on the depressing side of the account—otherwise the "Bad" page of the pocket-book.

"And as it is the policy of our law," Allan began, 'to prevent the marriage of persons under the age of twenty-one, without the consent of parents and guardians'——(Neelie made her first entry on the side of "Bad." "I am only seventeen next birthday, and circumstances forbid me to confide my attachment to papa")——"it is provided that in the case of the publication of banns of a person under twenty-one, not being a widower or widow, who are deemed emancipated'——(Neelie made another entry on the depressing side. "Allan is not a widower, and I am not a widow; consequently, we are neither of us emancipated,")——"if the parent or guardian openly signifies his dissent at the time the banns are published'——("which papa would be certain to do")——"such publication shall be void.' I'll take breath here, if you'll allow me," said Allan. "Blackstone might put it in shorter sentences, I think, if he can't put it in fewer words. Cheer up, Neelie! there must be other ways of marrying, besides this roundabout way, that ends in a Publication and a Void. Infernal gibberish! I could write better English myself."

"We are not at the end of it yet," said Neelie. "The Void is nothing to what is to come."

"Whatever it is," rejoined Allan, "we'll treat it like a dose of physic—we'll take it at once, and be done with it." He went on reading:—"And no licence to marry without banns shall be granted, unless oath shall be first made by one of the parties that he or she believes that there is no impediment of kindred or alliance'—well, I can take my oath of that with a safe conscience! What next? 'And one of the said parties must, for the space of fifteen days immediately preceding such licence, have had his or her usual place of abode within the parish or chapelry within which such marriage is to be solemnized!' Chapelry! I'd live fifteen days in a dog-kennel with the greatest pleasure. I say, Neelie, all this seems like plain sailing enough. What are you shaking your head about? Go on, and I shall see? Oh, all right; I'll go on. Here we are—'And where one of the said parties, not being a widower or widow, shall be under the age of twenty-one years, oath must first be made that the consent of the person or persons whose consent is required, has been obtained, or that there is no person having authority to give such consent. The consent required by this Act is that of the father——'" At those last formidable words Allan came to a full stop. "The consent of the father," he

repeated, with all needful seriousness of look and manner. "I couldn't exactly swear to that, could I?"

Neelie answered in expressive silence. She handed him the pocket-book, with the final entry completed, on the side of "Bad," in these terms—"Our marriage is impossible, unless Allan commits perjury."

The lovers looked at each other across the insuperable obstacle of Blackstone, in speechless dismay.

"Shut up the book," said Neelie, resignedly. "I have no doubt we should find the police, and the prison, and the hair-cutting—all punishments for perjury, exactly as I told you!—if we looked at the next page. But we needn't trouble ourselves to look; we have found out quite enough already. It's all over with us. I must go to school on Saturday, and you must manage to forget me as soon as you can. Perhaps we may meet in after-life, and you may be a widower and I may be a widow, and the cruel law may consider us emancipated, when it's too late to be of the slightest use. By that time no doubt I shall be old and ugly, and you will naturally have ceased to care about me, and it will all end in the grave, and the sooner the better. Good-by," concluded Neelie, rising mournfully, with the tears in her eyes. "It's only prolonging our misery to stop here, unless—unless you have anything to propose?"

"I've got something to propose," cried the headlong Allan. "It's an entirely new idea. Would you mind trying the blacksmith at Greta Green?"

"No earthly consideration," answered Neelie indignantly, "would induce me to be married by a blacksmith!"

"Don't be offended," pleaded Allan; "I meant it for the best. Lots of people in our situation have tried the blacksmith, and found him quite as good as a clergyman, and a most amiable man, I believe, into the bargain. Never mind! We must try another string to our bow."

"We haven't got another to try," said Neelie.

"Take my word for it," persisted Allan stoutly, "there must be ways and means of circumventing Blackstone (without perjury), if we only knew of them. It's a matter of law, and we must consult somebody in the profession. I daresay it's a risk. But nothing venture, nothing have. What do you say to young Pedgift? He's a thorough good fellow. I'm sure we could trust young Pedgift to keep our secret."

"Not for worlds!" exclaimed Neelie. "You may be willing to trust your secrets to the vulgar little wretch, I won't have him trusted with mine. I hate him. No!" she continued, with a mounting colour and a peremptory stamp of her foot on the grass. "I positively forbid you to take any of the Thorpe-Ambrose people into your confidence. They would instantly suspect me, and it would be all over the place in a moment. My attachment may be an unhappy one," remarked Neelie, with her handkerchief to her eyes, "and papa may nip it in the bud, but I won't have it profaned by the town-gossip!"

"Hush! hush!" said Allan. "I won't say a word at Thorpe-Ambrose,

"I won't indeed!" He paused, and considered for a moment. "There's another way!" he burst out, brightening up on the instant. "We've got the whole week before us. I'll tell you what I'll do, I'll go to London!"

There was a sudden rustling—heard neither by one nor the other—among the trees behind them that screened Miss Gwilt. One more of the difficulties in her way (the difficulty of getting Allan to London), now promised to be removed by an act of Allan's own will.

"To London?" repeated Neelie, looking up in astonishment.

"To London!" reiterated Allan. "That's far enough away from Thorpe-Ambrose, surely? Wait a minute, and don't forget that this is a question of law. Very well, I know some lawyers in London who managed all my business for me when I first came in for this property; they are just the men to consult. And if they decline to be mixed up in it, there's their head clerk, who is one of the best fellows I ever met with in my life. I asked him to go yachting with me, I remember; and though he couldn't go, he said he felt the obligation all the same. That's the man to help us. Blackstone's a mere infant to him. Don't say it's absurd; don't say it's exactly like me. Do pray hear me out. I won't breathe your name or your father's. I'll describe you as 'a young lady to whom I am devotedly attached.' And if my friend the clerk asks where you live, I'll say the north of Scotland, or the west of Ireland, or the Channel Islands, or anywhere else you like. My friend the clerk is a total stranger to Thorpe-Ambrose and everybody in it (which is one recommendation); and in five minutes' time, he'd put me up to what to do (which is another). If you only knew him! He's one of those extraordinary men who appear once or twice in a century—the sort of man who won't allow you to make a mistake if you try. All I have got to say to him (putting it short) is, 'My dear fellow, I want to be privately married, without perjury.' All he has got to say to me (putting it short) is, 'You must do So-and-So, and So-and-So; and you must be careful to avoid This, That, and The other. I have nothing in the world to do but to follow his directions; and you have nothing in the world to do but what the bride always does when the bridegroom is ready and waiting!' His arm stole round Neelie's waist, and his lips pointed the moral of the last sentence with that inarticulate eloquence which is so uniformly successful in persuading a woman against her will.

All Neelie's meditated objections dwindled, in spite of her, to one feeble little question. "Suppose I allow you to go, Allan?" she whispered, toying nervously with the stud in the bosom of his shirt, "Shall you be very long away?"

"I'll be off to-day," said Allan, "by the eleven o'clock train. And I'll be back to-morrow, if I and my friend the clerk can settle it all in time. If not, by Wednesday at latest."

"You'll write to me every day?" pleaded Neelie, clinging a little closer to him. "I shall sink under the suspense, if you don't promise to write to me every day."

Allan promised to write twice a day, if she liked—letter-writing, which was such an effort to other men, was no effort to *him*!

"And mind, whatever those people may say to you in London," proceeded Neelie, "I insist on your coming back for me. I positively decline to run away, unless you promise to fetch me."

Allan promised for the second time, on his sacred word of honour, and at the full compass of his voice. But Neelie was not satisfied even yet. She reverted to first principles, and insisted on knowing whether Allan was quite sure he loved her. Allan called heaven to witness how sure he was; and got another question directly for his pains. Could he solemnly declare that he would never regret taking Neelie away from home? Allan called heaven to witness again, louder than ever. All to no purpose! The ravenous female appetite for tender protestations still hungered for more. "I know what will happen one of these days," persisted Neelie. "You will see some other girl who is prettier than I am; and you will wish you had married her instead of Me!"

As Allan opened his lips for a final outburst of asseveration, the stable-clock at the great house was faintly audible in the distance, striking the hour. Neelie started guiltily. It was breakfast-time at the cottage—in other words, time to take leave. At the last moment her heart went back to her father; and her head sank on Allan's bosom as she tried to say, Good-by. "Papa has always been so kind to me, Allan," she whispered, holding him back tremulously when he turned to leave her. "It seems so guilty and so heartless to go away from him and be married in secret. Oh, do, do think before you really go to London; is there no way of making him a little kinder and juster to *you*?" The question was useless; the major's resolutely unfavourable reception of Allan's letter rose in Neelie's memory, and answered her as the words passed her lips. With a girl's impulsiveness, she pushed Allan away before he could speak, and signed to him impatiently to go. The conflict of contending emotions, which she had mastered thus far, burst its way outward in spite of her after he had waved his hand for the last time, and had disappeared in the depths of the dell. When she turned from the place, on her side, her long-restrained tears fell freely at last, and made the lonely way back to the cottage the dimmest prospect that Neelie had seen for many a long day past.

As she hurried homeward, the leaves parted behind her, and Miss Gwilt stepped softly into the open space. She stood there in triumph, tall, beautiful, and resolute. Her lovely colour brightened while she watched Neelie's retreating figure hastening lightly away from her over the grass.

"Cry, you little fool!" she said, with her quiet clear tones, and her steady smile of contempt. "Cry as you have never cried yet! You have seen the last of your sweetheart."

CHAPTER XII.

A SCANDAL AT THE STATION.

AN hour later, the landlady at Miss Gwilt's lodgings was lost in astonishment, and the clamorous tongues of the children were in a state of ungovernable revolt. "Unforeseen circumstances" had suddenly obliged the tenant of the first floor to terminate the occupation of her apartments, and to go to London that day by the eleven o'clock train.

"Please to have a fly at the door, at half-past ten," said Miss Gwilt, as the amazed landlady followed her upstairs. "And excuse me, you good creature, if I beg and pray not to be disturbed till the fly comes."

Once inside her room, she locked the door, and then opened her writing-desk. "Now for my letter to the major!" she said. "How shall I word it?"

A moment's consideration apparently decided her. Searching through her collection of pens, she carefully selected the worst that could be found, and began the letter by writing the date of the day on a soiled sheet of note-paper, in crooked clumsy characters, which ended in a blot made purposely with the feather of the pen. Pausing, sometimes to think a little, sometimes to make another blot, she completed the letter in these words:—

"HON^{ORABLE} SIR,—It is on my conscience to tell you something, which I think you ought to know. You ought to know of the goings-on of Miss, your daughter, with young Mister Armadale. I wish you to make sure, and what is more, I advise you to be quick about it, if she is going the way you want her to go, when she takes her morning walk before breakfast. I scorn to make mischief, where there is true love on both sides. But I don't think the young man means truly by Miss. What I mean is, I think Miss only has his fancy. Another person, who shall be nameless betwixt us, has his true heart. Please to pardon my not putting my name; I am only an humble person, and it might get me into trouble. This is all at present, dear sir, from yours,

"A WELL-WISHER."

"There!" said Miss Gwilt, as she folded the letter up. "If I had been a professed novelist, I could hardly have written more naturally in the character of a servant than that!" She wrote the necessary address to Major Milroy; looked admiringly for the last time at the coarse and clumsy writing which her own delicate hand had produced; and rose to post the letter herself, before she entered next on the serious business of packing up. "Curious!" she thought, when the letter had been posted, and she was back again making her travelling preparations in her own room; "here I am, running headlong into a frightful risk—and I never was in better spirits in my life!"

The boxes were ready when the fly was at the door, and Miss Gwilt was equipped (as becomingly as usual) in her neat travelling costume. The thick veil, which she was accustomed to wear in London, appeared on her country straw-bonnet for the first time. "One meets such rude men occasionally in the railway," she said to the landlady. "And though I dress quietly, my hair is so very remarkable." She was a little paler than usual; but she had never been so sweet-tempered and engaging, so gracefully cordial and friendly, as now, when the moment of departure had come. The simple people of the house were quite moved at taking leave of her. She insisted on shaking hands with the landlord—on speaking to him in her prettiest way, and sunning him in her brightest smiles. "Come!" she said to the landlady, "you have been so kind, you have been so like a mother to me, you must give me a kiss at parting." She embraced the children all together in the lump, with a mixture of humour and tenderness delightful to see, and left a shilling among them to buy a cake. "If I was only rich enough to make it a sovereign," she whispered to the mother, "how glad I should be!" The awkward lad who ran on errands stood waiting at the fly-door. He was clumsy, he was frowzy, he had a gaping mouth and a turn-up nose—but the ineradicable female delight in being charming, accepted him, for all that, in the character of a last chance. "You dear dingy John!" she said kindly at the carriage door. "I am so poor I have only sixpence to give you—with my very best wishes. Take my advice, John—grow to be a fine man, and find yourself a nice sweetheart! Thank you a thousand times!" She gave him a friendly little pat on the cheek with two of her gloved fingers, and smiled, and nodded, and got into the fly.

"Armada! next!" she said to herself as the carriage drove off.

Allan's anxiety not to miss the train had brought him to the station in better time than usual. After taking his ticket and putting his portmanteau under the porter's charge, he was pacing the platform and thinking of Neelie—when he heard the rustling of a lady's dress behind him, and turning round to look, found himself face to face with Miss Gwilt.

There was no escaping her this time. The station wall was on his right hand, and the line was on his left; a tunnel was behind him, and Miss Gwilt was in front, inquiring in her sweetest tones whether Mr. Armadale was going to London.

Allan coloured scarlet with vexation and surprise. There he was, obviously waiting for the train; and there was his portmanteau close by, with his name on it, already labelled for London! What answer but the true one could he make after that? Could he let the train go without him, and lose the precious hours so vitally important to Neelie and himself? Impossible! Allan helplessly confirmed the printed statement on his portmanteau, and heartily wished himself at the other end of the world as he said the words.

"How very fortunate!" rejoined Miss Gwilt. "I am going to London too. Might I ask you, Mr. Armadale (as you seem to be quite alone), to be my escort on the journey?"

Allan looked at the little assembly of travellers, and travellers' friends, collected on the platform, near the booking-office door. They were all Thorpe-Ambrose people. He was probably known by sight, and Miss Gwilt was probably known by sight, to every one of them. In sheer desperation, hesitating more awkwardly than ever, he produced his cigar-case. "I should be delighted," he said, with an embarrassment which was almost an insult under the circumstances. "But I—I'm what the people who get sick over a cigar, call a slave to smoking."

"I delight in smoking!" said Miss Gwilt, with undiminished vivacity and good humour. "It's one of the privileges of the men which I have always envied. I'm afraid, Mr. Armadale, you must think I am forcing myself on you. It certainly looks like it. The real truth is, I want particularly to say a word to you in private about Mr. Midwinter."

The train came up at the same moment. Setting Midwinter out of the question, the common decencies of politeness left Allan no alternative but to submit. After having been the cause of her leaving her situation at Major Milroy's, after having pointedly avoided her only a few days since on the high-road, to have declined going to London in the same carriage with Miss Gwilt would have been an act of downright brutality which it was simply impossible to commit. "Damn her!" said Allan, internally, as he handed his travelling companion into an empty carriage, officiously placed at his disposal, before all the people at the station, by the guard. "You shan't be disturbed, sir," the man whispered confidentially, with a smile, and a touch of his hat. Allan could have knocked him down with the utmost pleasure. "Stop!" he said, from the window. "I don't want the carriage—" It was useless; the guard was out of hearing; the whistle blew, and the train started for London.

The select assembly of travellers' friends, left behind on the platform, congregated in a circle on the spot, with the station-master in the centre.

The station-master—otherwise, Mr. Mack—was a popular character in the neighbourhood. He possessed two social qualifications which invariably impress the average English mind—he was an old soldier, and he was a man of few words. The conclave on the platform insisted on taking his opinion, before it committed itself positively to an opinion of its own. A brisk fire of remarks exploded, as a matter of course, on all sides; but everybody's view of the subject ended interrogatively, in a question aimed point-blank at the station-master's ears.

"She's got him, hasn't she?" "She'll come back 'Mrs. Armadale,' won't she?" "He'd better have stuck to Miss Milroy, hadn't he?" "Miss Milroy stuck to *him*. She paid him a visit at the great house, didn't she?" "Nothing of the sort; it's a shame to take the girl's character away. She was caught in a thunderstorm close by; he was

obliged to give her shelter ; and she's never been near the place since. Miss Gwilt's been there, if you like, with no thunderstorm to force *her* in ; and Miss Gwilt's off with him to London in a carriage all to themselves, eh, Mr. Mack ? ” “ Ah, he's a soft one, that Armadale ! with all his money, to take up with a red-haired woman, a good eight or nine years older than he is ! She's thirty if she's a day. That's what I say, Mr. Mack. What do you say ? ” “ Older or younger, she'll rule the roast at Thorpe-Ambrose ; and I say, for the sake of the place, and for the sake of trade, let's make the best of it ; and Mr. Mack, as a man of the world, sees it in the same light as I do, don't you, sir ? ”

“ Gentlemen,” said the station-master, with his abrupt military accent, and his impenetrable military manner, “ she's a devilish fine woman. And, when I was Mr. Armadale's age, it's my opinion, if her fancy had laid that way, she might have married Me.”

With that expression of opinion the station-master wheeled to the right, and intrenched himself impregably in the stronghold of his own office.

The citizens of Thorpe-Ambrose looked at the closed door, and gravely shook their heads. Mr. Mack had disappointed them. No opinion which openly recognizes the frailty of human nature, is ever a popular opinion with mankind. “ It's as good as saying that any of *us* might have married her, if *we* had been Mr. Armadale's age ! ” Such was the general impression on the minds of the conclave, when the meeting had been adjourned, and the members were leaving the station.

The last of the party to go was a slow old gentleman, with a habit of deliberately looking about him. Pausing at the door, this observant person stared up the platform, and down the platform, and discovered in the latter direction, standing behind an angle of the wall, an elderly man in black, who had escaped the notice of everybody up to that time. “ Why, bless my soul ! ” said the old gentleman, advancing inquisitively by a step at a time, “ it can't be Mr. Bashwood ! ”

It *was* Mr. Bashwood—Mr. Bashwood, whose constitutional curiosity had taken him privately to the station, bent on solving the mystery of Allan's sudden journey to London—Mr. Bashwood who had seen and heard, behind his angle in the wall, what everybody else had seen and heard, and who appeared to have been impressed by it in no ordinary way. He stood stiffly against the wall, like a man petrified, with one hand pressed on his bare head, and the other holding his hat—he stood, with a dull flush on his face, and a dull stare in his eyes, looking straight into the black depths of the tunnel outside the station, as if the train to London had disappeared in it but the moment before.

“ Is your head bad ? ” asked the old gentleman. “ Take my advice. Go home and lie down.”

Mr. Bashwood listened mechanically, with his usual attention, and answered mechanically, with his usual politeness.

“ Yes, sir,” he said, in a low lost tone, like a man between dreaming and waking ; “ I'll go home and lie down.”

"That's right," rejoined the old gentleman, making for the door. "And take a pill, Mr. Bashwood—take a pill."

Five minutes later, the porter charged with the business of locking up the station, found Mr. Bashwood, still standing bareheaded against the wall, and still looking straight into the black depths of the tunnel, as if the train to London had disappeared in it but a moment since.

"Come, sir!" said the porter. "I must lock up. Are you out of sorts? Anything wrong with your inside? Try a drop of gin-and-bitters."

"Yes," said Mr. Bashwood, answering the porter exactly as he had answered the old gentleman; "I'll try a drop of gin-and-bitters."

The porter took him by the arm, and led him out. "You'll get it there," said the man, pointing confidentially to a public-house; "and you'll get it good."

"I shall get it there," echoed Mr. Bashwood, still mechanically repeating what was said to him; "and I shall get it good."

His will seemed to be paralysed; his actions depended absolutely on what other people told him to do. He took a few steps in the direction of the public-house—hesitated; staggered—and caught at the pillar of one of the station lamps near him.

The porter followed, and took him by the arm once more.

"Why, you've been drinking already!" exclaimed the man, with a suddenly-quicken interest in Mr. Bashwood's case. "What was it? Beer?"

Mr. Bashwood, in his low lost tones, echoed the last word.

It was close on the porter's dinner-time. But when the lower orders of the English people believe they have discovered an intoxicated man, their sympathy with him is boundless. The porter let his dinner take its chance, and carefully assisted Mr. Bashwood to reach the public-house. "Gin-and-bitters will put you on your legs again," whispered this Samaritan setter-right of the alcoholic disasters of mankind.

If Mr. Bashwood had really been intoxicated, the effect of the porter's remedy would have been marvellous indeed. Almost as soon as the glass was emptied, the stimulant did its work. The long-weakened nervous system of the deputy-steward, prostrated for the moment by the shock that had fallen on it, rallied again like a weary horse under the spur. The dull flush on his cheeks, the dull stare in his eyes, disappeared simultaneously. After a momentary effort, he recovered memory enough of what had passed to thank the porter, and to ask whether he would take something himself. The worthy creature instantly accepted a dose of his own remedy—in the capacity of a preventive—and went home to dinner as only those men can go home who are physically warmed by gin-and-bitters, and morally elevated by the performance of a good action.

Still strangely abstracted (but conscious now of the way by which he went), Mr. Bashwood left the public-house a few minutes later, in his turn. He walked on mechanically, in his dreary black garments, moving like a blot on the white surface of the sun-brightened road, as Midwinter had

seen him move in the early days at Thorpe-Ambrose when they had first met. Arrived at the point where he had to choose between the way that led into the town, and the way that led to the great house, he stopped, incapable of deciding, and careless, apparently, even of making the attempt. "I'll be revenged on her!" he whispered to himself, still absorbed in his jealous frenzy of rage against the woman who had deceived him. "I'll be revenged on her," he repeated in louder tones, "if I spend every halfpenny I've got!"

Some women of the disorderly sort, passing on their way to the town, heard him. "Ah, you old brute," they called out, with the measureless licence of their class; "whatever she did, she served you right!"

The coarseness of the voices startled him, whether he comprehended the words or not. He shrank away from more interruption and more insult, into the quieter road that led to the great house.

At a solitary place by the wayside, he stopped and sat down. He took off his hat, and lifted his youthful wig a little from his bald old head, and tried desperately to get beyond the one immoveable conviction which lay on his mind like lead—the conviction that Miss Gwilt had been purposely deceiving him from the first. It was useless. No effort would free him from that one dominant impression, and from the one answering idea that it had evoked—the idea of revenge. He got up again, and put on his hat, and walked rapidly forward a little way—then turned without knowing why, and slowly walked back again. "If I had only dressed a little smarter!" said the poor wretch, helplessly. "If I had only been a little bolder with her, she might have overlooked my being an old man!" The angry fit returned on him. He clenched his clammy trembling hands, and shook them fiercely in the empty air. "I'll be revenged on her," he reiterated. "I'll be revenged on her, if I spend every halfpenny I've got!" It was terribly suggestive of the hold she had taken on him, that his vindictive sense of injury could not get far enough away from her to reach the man whom he believed to be his rival, even yet. In his rage, as in his love, he was absorbed, body and soul, by Miss Gwilt.

In a moment more, the noise of running wheels approaching from behind startled him. He turned, and looked round. There was Mr. Pedgift the elder, rapidly overtaking him in the gig, just as Mr. Pedgift had overtaken him once already, on that former occasion when he had listened under the window at the great house, and when the lawyer had bluntly charged him with feeling a curiosity about Miss Gwilt!

In an instant, the inevitable association of ideas burst on his mind. The opinion of Miss Gwilt, which he had heard the lawyer express to Allan, at parting, flashed back into his memory, side by side with Mr. Pedgift's sarcastic approval of anything in the way of inquiry which his own curiosity might attempt. "I may be even with her yet," he thought, "if Mr. Pedgift will help me!—Stop, sir!" he called out desperately as the gig came up with him. "If please, sir, I want to speak to you."

Pedgift Senior slackened the pace of his fast-trotting mare, without pulling up. "Come to the office in half-an-hour," he said. "I'm busy now." Without waiting for an answer, without noticing Mr. Bashwood's bow, he gave the mare the rein again, and was out of sight in another minute.

Mr. Bashwood sat down once more in a shady place by the roadside. He appeared to be incapable of feeling any alight but the one unpardonable alight put upon him by Miss Gwilt. He not only declined to resent, he even made the best of Mr. Pedgift's unceremonious treatment of him. "Half-an-hour," he said, resignedly. "Time enough to compose myself; and I want time. Very kind of Mr. Pedgift, though he mightn't have meant it."

The sense of oppression on his head forced him once again to remove his hat. He sat with it on his lap, deep in thought; his face bent low, and the wavering fingers of one hand drumming absently on the crown of the hat. If Mr. Pedgift the elder, seeing him as he sat now, could only have looked a little beyond him into the future, the monotonously-drumming hand of the deputy-steward might have been strong enough, feeble as it was, to stop the lawyer by the roadside. It was the worn, weary, miserable old hand of a worn, weary, miserable old man—but it was, for all that (to use the language of Mr. Pedgift's own parting prediction to Allan), the hand that was now destined to "let the light in on Miss Gwilt."

CHAPTER XIII.

AN OLD MAN'S HEART.

PUNCTUAL to the moment, when the half hour's interval had expired, Mr. Bashwood was announced at the office, as waiting to see Mr. Pedgift by special appointment.

The lawyer looked up from his papers with an air of annoyance: he had totally forgotten the meeting by the roadside. "See what he wants," said Pedgift Senior to Pedgift Junior, working in the same room with him. "And, if it's nothing of importance, put it off to some other time."

Pedgift Junior swiftly disappeared, and swiftly returned.

"Well?" asked the father.

"Well," answered the son, "he is rather more shaky and unintelligible than usual. I can make nothing out of him, except that he persists in wanting to see you. My own idea," pursued Pedgift Junior, with his usual sardonic gravity, "is, that he is going to have a fit, and that he wishes to acknowledge your uniform kindness to him, by obliging you with a private view of the whole proceeding."

Pedgift Senior habitually matched everybody—his son included—with their own weapons. "Be good enough to remember, Augustus," he rejoined, "that My Room is not a Court of Law. A bad joke is not invariably followed by 'roars of laughter' *here*. Let Mr. Bashwood come in."

Mr. Bashwood was introduced, and Pedgift Junior withdrew. "You mustn't bleed him, sir," whispered the incorrigible joker, as he passed the back of his father's chair. "Hot-water bottles to the soles of his feet, and a mustard plaster on the pit of his stomach—that's the modern treatment."

"Sit down, Bashwood," said Pedgift Senior, when they were alone. "And don't forget that time's money. Out with it, whatever it is, at the quickest possible rate, and in the fewest possible words."

These preliminary directions, bluntly but not at all unkindly spoken, rather increased than diminished the painful agitation under which Mr. Bashwood was suffering. He stammered more helplessly, he trembled more continuously than usual, as he made his little speech of thanks, and added his apologies at the end for intruding on his patron in business hours.

"Everybody in the place, Mr. Pedgift, sir, knows your time is valuable. Oh, dear, yes! oh, dear, yes! most valuable, most valuable! Excuse me, sir, I'm coming out with it. Your goodness—or rather your business—no, your goodness gave me half-an-hour to wait—and I have thought of what I had to say, and prepared it, and put it short." Having got as far as that, he stopped with a pained, bewildered look. He had put it away in his memory, and now, when the time came, he was too confused to find it. And there was Mr. Pedgift mutely waiting; his face and manner alike expressive of that silent sense of the value of his own time, which every patient who has visited a great doctor, every client who has consulted a lawyer in large practice, knows so well. "Have you heard the news, sir?" stammered Mr. Bashwood, shifting his ground in despair, and letting the uppermost idea in his mind escape him, simply because it was the one idea in him that was ready to come out.

"Does it concern *me*?" asked Pedgift Senior, mercilessly brief, and mercilessly straight in coming to the point.

"It concerns a lady, sir,—no, not a lady—a young man I ought to say, in whom you used to feel some interest. Oh, Mr. Pedgift, sir, what do you think! Mr. Armadale and Miss Gwilt have gone up to London together to-day—alone, sir—alone in a carriage reserved for their two selves. Do you think he's going to marry her? Do you really think, like the rest of them, he's going to marry her?"

He put the question with a sudden flush in his face, and a sudden energy in his manner. His sense of the value of the lawyer's time, his conviction of the greatness of the lawyer's condescension, his constitutional shyness and timidity—all yielded together to his one overwhelming interest in hearing Mr. Pedgift's answer. He was loud for the first time in his life, in putting the question.

"After my experience of Mr. Armadale," said the lawyer, instantly hardening in look and manner, "I believe him to be infatuated enough to marry Miss Gwilt a dozen times over, if Miss Gwilt chose to ask him. Your news doesn't surprise me in the least, Bashwood. I'm sorry for

him. I can honestly say that, though he *has* set my advice at defiance. And I'm more sorry still," he continued, softening again as his mind reverted to his interview with Neellie under the trees of the park; "I'm more sorry still for another person who shall be nameless. But what have I to do with all this? and what on earth is the matter with you?" he resumed, noticing for the first time the abject misery in Mr. Bashwood's manner, the blank despair in Mr. Bashwood's face, which his answer had produced. "Are you ill? Is there something behind the curtain that you're afraid to bring out? I don't understand it. Have you come here—here in my private room, in business hours—with nothing to tell me but that young Armadale has been fool enough to ruin his prospects for life? Why, I foresaw it all weeks since, and what is more, I as good as told him so at the last conversation I had with him in the great house."

At those last words, Mr. Bashwood suddenly rallied. The lawyer's passing reference to the great house had led him back in a moment to the purpose that he had in view.

"That's it, sir!" he said eagerly; "that's what I wanted to speak to you about; that's what I've been preparing in my mind. Mr. Pedgift, sir, the last time you were at the great house, when you came away in your gig, you—you overtook me on the drive."

"I daresay I did," remarked Pedgift, resignedly. "My mare happens to be a trifle quicker on her legs than you are on yours, Bashwood. Go on, go on. We shall come in time, I suppose, to what you are driving at."

"You stopped, and spoke to me, sir," proceeded Mr. Bashwood, advancing more and more eagerly to his end. "You said you suspected me of feeling some curiosity about Miss Gwilt, and you told me (I remember the exact words, sir)—you told me to gratify my curiosity by all means, for you didn't object to it."

Pedgift Senior began for the first time to look interested in hearing more.

"I remember something of the sort," he replied; "and I also remember thinking it rather remarkable that you should *happen*—we won't put it in any more offensive way—to be exactly under Mr. Armadale's open window while I was talking to him. It might have been accident of course; but it looked rather more like curiosity. I could only judge by appearances," concluded Pedgift, pointing his sarcasm with a pinch of snuff; "and appearances, Bashwood, were decidedly against you."

"I don't deny it, sir. I only mentioned the circumstance because I wished to acknowledge that I *was* curious, and *am* curious about Miss Gwilt."

"Why?" asked Pedgift Senior, seeing something under the surface in Mr. Bashwood's face and manner, but utterly in the dark thus far as to what that something might be.

There was silence for a moment. The moment passed, Mr. Bashwood took the refuge usually taken by nervous unready men, placed in his circumstances, when they are at a loss for an answer. He simply reiterated

the assertion that he had just made. "I feel some curiosity, sir," he said, with a strange mixture of doggedness and timidity, "about Miss Gwilt."

There was another moment of silence. In spite of his practised acuteness and knowledge of the world, the lawyer was more puzzled than ever. The case of Mr. Bashwood presented the one human riddle of all others, which he was least qualified to solve. Though year after year witnesses, in thousands and thousands of cases, the remorseless disinheriting of nearest and dearest relations, the unnatural breaking-up of sacred family ties, the deplorable severance of old and firm friendships, due entirely to the intense self-absorption which the sexual passion can produce when it enters the heart of an old man, the association of love with infirmity and grey hairs arouses, nevertheless, all the world over, no other idea than the idea of extravagant improbability or extravagant absurdity in the general mind. If the interview now taking place in Mr. Pedgift's consulting-room had taken place at his dinner-table instead, when wine had opened his mind to humorous influences, it is possible that he might, by this time, have suspected the truth. But, in his business hours, Pedgift Senior was in the habit of investigating men's motives seriously from the business point of view; and he was on that very account simply incapable of conceiving any improbability so startling, any absurdity so enormous, as the absurdity and improbability of Mr. Bashwood's being in love.

Some men in the lawyer's position would have tried to force their way to enlightenment by obstinately repeating the unanswered question. Pedgift Senior wisely postponed the question until he had moved the conversation on another step. "Well," he resumed, "let us say you feel a curiosity about Miss Gwilt. What next?"

The pulms of Mr. Bashwood's hands began to moisten under the influence of his agitation, as they had moistened in the past days when he had told the story of his domestic sorrows to Midwinter at the great house. Once more he rolled his handkerchief into a ball, and dabbed it softly to and fro from one hand to the other.

"May I ask if I am right, sir," he began, "in believing that you have a very unfavourable opinion of Miss Gwilt? You are quite convinced, I think——"

"My good fellow," interrupted Pedgift Senior, "why need you be in any doubt about it? You were under Mr. Armadale's open window all the while I was talking to him; and your ears, I presume, were not absolutely shut."

Mr. Bashwood showed no sense of the interruption. The little sting of the lawyer's sarcasm was lost in the nobler pain that wrung him from the wound inflicted by Miss Gwilt.

"You are quite convinced, I think, sir," he resumed, "that there are circumstances in this lady's past life, which would be highly discreditable to her if they were discovered at the present time?"

"The window was open at the great house, Bashwood; and your ears, I presume, were not absolutely shut."

Still impenetrable to the sting, Mr. Bashwood persisted more obstinately than ever.

"Unless I am greatly mistaken," he said, "your long experience in such things has even suggested to you, sir, that Miss Gwilt might turn out to be known to the police?"

Pedgift Senior's patience gave way. "You have been over ten minutes in this room," he broke out; "can you, or can you not, tell me in plain English what you want?"

In plain English—with the passion that had transformed him, the passion which (in Miss Gwilt's own words) had made a man of him, burning in his haggard cheeks—Mr. Bashwood met the challenge, and faced the lawyer (as the worried sheep faces the dog) on his own ground.

"I wish to say, sir," he answered, "that your opinion in this matter is my opinion too. I believe there is something wrong in Miss Gwilt's past life, which she keeps concealed from everybody—and I want to be the man who knows it."

Pedgift Senior saw his chance, and instantly reverted to the question that he had postponed. "Why?" he asked for the second time.

For the second time, Mr. Bashwood hesitated. Could he acknowledge that he had been mad enough to love her, and mean enough to be a spy for her? Could he say, She has deceived me from the first, and she has deserted me now her object is served. After robbing me of my happiness, robbing me of my honour, robbing me of my last hope left in life, she has gone from me for ever, and left me nothing but my old man's longing, slow and sly, and strong and changeless, for revenge. Revenge that I may have, if I can poison her success by dragging her frailties into the public view. Revenge that I will buy (for what is gold or what is life to me?) with the last farthing of my hoarded money and the last drop of my stagnant blood. Could he say that to the man who sat waiting for his answer? No: he could only crush it down and be silent.

The lawyer's expression began to harden once more.

"One of us must speak out," he said; "and, as you evidently won't, I will. I can only account for this extraordinary anxiety of yours to make yourself acquainted with Miss Gwilt's secrets, in one of two ways. Your motive is either an excessively mean one (no offence, Bashwood, I am only putting the case), or an excessively generous one. After my experience of your honest character and your creditable conduct, it is only your due that I should absolve you at once of the mean motive. I believe you are as incapable as I am—I can say no more—of turning to mercenary account any discoveries you might make to Miss Gwilt's prejudice in Miss Gwilt's past life. Shall I go on any further? or would you prefer, on second thoughts, opening your mind frankly to me of your own accord?"

"I should prefer not interrupting you, sir," said Mr. Bashwood.

"As you please," pursued Pedgift Senior. "Having absolved you of the mean motive, I come to the generous motive next. It is possible that you are an unusually grateful man; and it is certain that Mr. Armadale has been remarkably kind to you. After employing you under Mr. Midwinter, in the steward's office, he has had confidence enough in your honesty and your capacity, now his friend has left him, to put his business entirely and unreservedly in your hands. It's not in my experience of human nature—but it may be possible nevertheless—that you are so gratefully sensible of that confidence, and so gratefully interested in your employer's welfare, that you can't see him, in his friendless position, going straight to his own disgrace and ruin, without making an effort to save him. To put it in two words. Is it your idea that Mr. Armadale might be prevented from marrying Miss Gwilt, if he could be informed in time of her real character? And do you wish to be the man who opens his eyes to the truth? If that is the case——"

He stopped in astonishment. Acting under some uncontrollable impulse, Mr. Bashwood had started to his feet. He stood, with his withered face lit up by a sudden irradiation from within, which made him look younger than his age by a good twenty years—he stood, gasping for breath enough to speak, and gesticulated entreatingly at the lawyer with both hands.

"Say it again, sir!" he burst out eagerly; recovering his breath, before Pedgift Senior had recovered his surprise. "The question about Mr. Armadale, sir!—only once more!—only once more, Mr. Pedgift, please!"

With his practised observation closely and distrustfully at work on Mr. Bashwood's face, Pedgift Senior motioned to him to sit down again, and put the question for the second time.

"Do I think," said Mr. Bashwood, repeating the sense, but not the words of the question, "that Mr. Armadale might be parted from Miss Gwilt, if she could be shown to him as she really is? Yes, sir! And do I wish to be the man who does it? Yes, sir! yes, sir!! yes, sir!!!"

"It's rather strange," remarked the lawyer, looking at him more and more distrustfully, "that you should be so violently agitated, simply because my question happens to have hit the mark."

The question happened to have hit a mark which Pedgift little dreamed of. It had released Mr. Bashwood's mind in an instant, from the dead pressure of his one dominant idea of revenge, and had shown him a purpose to be achieved by the discovery of Miss Gwilt's secrets, which had never occurred to him till that moment. The marriage which he had blindly regarded as inevitable, was a marriage that might be stopped—not in Allan's interests, but in his own—and the woman whom he believed that he had lost, might yet, in spite of circumstances, be a woman won! His brain whirled as he thought of it. His own roused resolution almost daunted him, by its terrible incongruity with

all the familiar habits of his mind, and all the customary proceedings of his life.

Finding his last remark unanswered, Pedgift Senior considered a little, before he said anything more.

"One thing is clear," reasoned the lawyer with himself. "His true motive in this matter, is a motive which he is afraid to avow. My question evidently offered him a chance of misleading me, and he has accepted it on the spot. That's enough for *me*. If I was Mr. Armadale's lawyer, the mystery might be worth investigating. As things are, it's no interest of mine to hunt Mr. Bashwood from one lie to another, till I run him to earth at last. I have nothing whatever to do with it; and I shall leave him free to follow his own roundabout courses, in his own roundabout way." Having arrived at that conclusion, Pedgift Senior pushed back his chair, and rose briskly to terminate the interview.

"Don't be alarmed, Bashwood," he began. "The subject of our conversation is a subject exhausted, so far as I am concerned. I have only a few last words to say, and it's a habit of mine, as you know, to say my last words on my legs. Whatever else I may be in the dark about, I have made one discovery, at any rate. I have found out what you really want with me—at last! You want me to help you."

"If you would be so very, very kind, sir?" stammered Mr. Bashwood. "If you would only give me the great advantage of your opinion and advice—?"

"Wait a bit, Bashwood. We will separate those two things if you please. A lawyer may offer an opinion like any other man; but when a lawyer gives his advice—by the Lord Harry, sir, it's Professional! You're welcome to my opinion in this matter; I have disguised it from nobody. I believe there have been events in Miss Gwilt's career, which (if they could be discovered) would even make Mr. Armadale, infatuated as he is, afraid to marry her—supposing, of course, that he really is going to marry her; for though the appearances are in favour of it so far, it is only an assumption after all. As to the mode of proceeding by which the blots on this woman's character might or might not be brought to light in time—she may be married by licence in a fortnight if she likes—that is a branch of the question on which I positively decline to enter. It implies speaking in my character as a lawyer, and giving you, what I decline positively to give you, my professional advice."

"Oh, sir, don't say that!" pleaded Mr. Bashwood. "Don't deny me the great favour, the inestimable advantage of your advice! I have such a poor head, Mr. Pedgift! I am so old and so slow, sir, and I get so sadly startled and worried when I'm thrown out of my ordinary ways. It's quite natural you should be a little impatient with me for taking up your time—I know that time is money, to a clever man like you. Would you excuse me—would you please excuse me, if I venture to say that I have saved a little something, a few pounds, sir; and being quite lonely, with nobody dependent on me, I'm sure I may spend my savings as I please?"

Blind to every consideration but the one consideration of propitiating Mr. Pedgift, he took out a dingy, ragged old pocket-book, and tried, with trembling fingers, to open it on the lawyer's table.

"Put your pocket-book back directly," said Pedgift Senior. "Richer men than you have tried that argument with me, and have found that there is such a thing (off the stage) as a lawyer who is not to be bribed. I will have nothing to do with the case, under existing circumstances. If you want to know why, I beg to inform you that Miss Gwilt ceased to be professionally interesting to me on the day when I ceased to be Mr. Armadale's lawyer. I may have other reasons besides, which I don't think it necessary to mention. The reason already given is explicit enough. Go your own way, and take your responsibility on your own shoulders. You may venture within reach of Miss Gwilt's claws, and come out again without being scratched. Time will show. In the meanwhile, I wish you good-morning—and I own, to my shame, that I never knew till to-day what a hero you were."

This time, Mr. Bashwood felt the sting. Without another word of expostulation or entreaty, without even saying "Good-morning" on his side, he walked to the door, opened it softly, and left the room.

The parting look in his face, and the sudden silence that had fallen on him, were not lost on Pedgift Senior. "Bashwood will end badly," said the lawyer, shuffling his papers, and returning impenetrably to his interrupted work.

The change in Mr. Bashwood's face and manner to something dogged and self-contained, was so startlingly uncharacteristic of him, that it even forced itself on the notice of Pedgift Junior and the clerks, as he passed through the outer office. Accustomed to make the old man their butt, they took a boisterously comic view of the marked alteration in him. Deaf to the merciless raillery with which he was assailed on all sides, he stopped opposite young Pedgift; and looking him attentively in the face, said, in a quiet absent manner, like a man thinking aloud, "I wonder whether *you* would help me?"

"Open an account instantly," said Pedgift Junior to the clerks, "in the name of Mr. Bashwood. Place a chair for Mr. Bashwood, with a foot-stool close by, in case he wants it. Supply me with a quire of extra double-wove satin paper, and a gross of picked quills to take notes of Mr. Bashwood's case; and inform my father instantly that I am going to leave him and set up in business for myself, on the strength of Mr. Bashwood's patronage. Take a seat, sir, pray take a seat, and express your feelings freely."

Still impenetrably deaf to the raillery of which he was the object, Mr. Bashwood waited until Pedgift Junior had exhausted himself, and then turned quietly away.

"I ought to have known better," he said, in the same absent manner as before. "He is his father's son all over—he would make game of me

on my deathbed." He paused a moment at the door, mechanically brushing his hat with his hand, and went out into the street.

The bright sunshine dazzled his eyes, the passing vehicles and foot-passengers startled and bewildered him. He shrank into a by-street, and put his hand over his eyes. "I'd better go home," he thought, "and shut myself up, and think about it in my own room."

His lodging was in a small house, in the poor quarter of the town. He let himself in with his key, and stole softly upstairs. The one little room he possessed met him cruelly, look round it where he might, with silent memorials of Miss Gwilt. On the chimney-piece were the flowers she had given him at various times, all withered long since, and all preserved on a little china pedestal, protected by a glass shade. On the wall hung a wretched coloured print of a woman, which he had caused to be nicely framed and glazed, because there was a look in it that reminded him of her face. In his clumsy old mahogany writing-desk were the few letters, brief and peremptory, which she had written to him at the time when he was watching and listening meanly at Thorpe-Ambrose to please her. And when, turning his back on these, he sat down wearily on his sofa-bedstead—there, hanging over one end of it, was the gaudy cravat of blue satin, which he had bought because she had told him she liked bright colours, and which he had never yet had the courage to wear, though he had taken it out morning after morning with the resolution to put it on! Habitually quiet in his actions, habitually restrained in his language, he now seized the cravat as if it was a living thing that could feel, and flung it to the other end of the room with an oath.

The time passed; and still, though his resolution to stand between Miss Gwilt and her marriage remained unbroken, he was as far as ever from discovering the means which might lead him to his end. The more he thought and thought of it, the darker and the darker his course in the future looked to him.

He rose again, as wearily as he had sat down, and went to his cupboard. "I'm feverish and thirsty," he said; "a cup of tea may help me." He opened his canister, and measured out his small allowance of tea, less carefully than usual. "Even my own hands won't serve me to-day!" he thought, as he scraped together the few grains of tea that he had spilt, and put them carefully back in the canister.

In that fine summer weather, the one fire in the house was the kitchen-fire. He went downstairs for the boiling water, with his teapot in his hand.

Nobody but the landlady was in the kitchen. She was one of the many English matrons whose path through this world is a path of thorns; and who take a dismal pleasure, whenever the opportunity is afforded them, in inspecting the scratched and bleeding feet of other people in a like condition with themselves. Her one vice was of the lighter sort—the vice of curiosity; and among the many counterbalancing virtues she possessed, was the virtue of greatly respecting Mr. Bashwood, as a lodger

whose rent was regularly paid, and whose ways were always quiet and civil from one year's end to another.

"What did you please to want, sir?" asked the landlady. "Boiling water, is it? Did you ever know the water boil, Mr. Bashwood, when you wanted it? Did you ever see a sulkier fire than that? I'll put a stick or two in, if you'll wait a little, and give me the chance. Dear, dear me, you'll excuse my mentioning it, sir, but how poorly you do look to-day!"

The strain on Mr. Bashwood's mind was beginning to tell. Something of the helplessness which he had shown at the station, appeared again in his face and manner as he put his teapot on the kitchen-table, and sat down.

"I'm in trouble, ma'am," he said quietly; "and I find trouble gets harder to bear than it used to be."

"Ah, you may well say that!" groaned the landlady. "I'm ready for the undertaker, Mr. Bashwood, when *my* time comes, whatever you may be. You're too lonely, sir. When you're in trouble it's some help—though not much—to shift a share of it off on another person's shoulders. If your good lady had only been alive now, sir, what a comfort you would have found her, wouldn't you?"

A momentary spasm of pain passed across Mr. Bashwood's face. The landlady had ignorantly recalled him to the misfortunes of his married life. He had been long since forced to quiet her curiosity about his family affairs, by telling her that he was a widower, and that his domestic circumstances had not been happy ones; but he had taken her no further into his confidence than this. The sad story which he had related to Midwinter, of his drunken wife who had ended her miserable life in a lunatic asylum, was a story which he had shrunk from confiding to the talkative woman, who would have confided it in her turn to every one else in the house.

"What I always say to my husband, when he's low, sir," pursued the landlady, intent on the kettle, "is, 'What would you do *now*, Sam, without Me?' When his temper don't get the better of him (it will boil directly, Mr. Bashwood), he says, 'Elizabeth, I could do nothing.' When his temper does get the better of him, he says, 'I should try the public-house, missus; and I'll try it now.' Ah, I've got *my* troubles! A man with grown-up sons and daughters, tippling in a public-house! I don't call to mind, Mr. Bashwood, whether *you* ever had any sons and daughters? And yet, now I think of it, I seem to fancy you said yes, you had. Daughters, sir, weren't they?—and, ah, dear! dear! to be sure! all dead."

"I had one daughter, ma'am," said Mr. Bashwood, patiently—"Only one, who died before she was a year old."

"Only one!" repeated the sympathising landlady. "It's as near boiling as it ever will be, sir; give me the teapot. Only one! Ah, it comes heavier (don't it?) when it's an only child? You said it was an only child, I think, didn't you, sir?"

For a moment, Mr. Bashwood looked at the woman with vacant eyes, and without attempting to answer her. After ignorantly recalling the memory of the wife who had disgraced him, she was now, as ignorantly, forcing him back on the miserable remembrance of the son who had ruined and deserted him. For the first time, since he had told his story to Midwinter, at their introductory interview in the great house, his mind reverted once more to the bitter disappointment and disaster of the past. Again, he thought of the bygone days, when he had become security for his son, and when that son's dishonesty had forced him to sell everything he possessed, to pay the forfeit that was exacted when the forfeit was due. "I have a son, ma'am," he said, becoming conscious that the landlady was looking at him in mute and melancholy surprise. "I did my best to help him forward in the world, and he has behaved very badly to me."

"Did he now?" rejoined the landlady, with an appearance of the greatest interest. "Behaved badly to you—almost broke your heart, didn't he? Ah, it will come home to him, sooner or later. Don't you fear! Honour your father and mother, wasn't put on Moses's tables of stone for nothing, Mr. Bashwood. Where may he be, and what is he doing now, sir?"

The question was in effect almost the same as the question which Midwinter had put when the circumstances had been described to him. As Mr. Bashwood had answered it on the former occasion, so (in nearly the same words) he answered it now.

"My son is in London, ma'am, for all I know to the contrary. He was employed, when I last heard of him, in no very creditable way, at the Private Inquiry Office——"

At those words, he suddenly checked himself. His face flushed, his eyes brightened; he pushed away the cup which had just been filled for him, and rose from his seat. The landlady started back a step. There was something in her lodger's face that she had never seen in it before.

"I hope I've not offended you, sir," said the woman, recovering her self-possession, and looking a little too ready to take offence on her side, at a moment's notice.

"Far from it, ma'am, far from it!" he rejoined in a strangely eager, hurried way. "I have just remembered something—something very important. I must go upstairs—it's a letter, a letter, a letter. I'll come back to my tea, ma'am. I beg your pardon, I'm much obliged to you, you've been very kind—I'll say good-by, if you'll allow me for the present." To the landlady's amazement, he cordially shook hands with her, and made for the door, leaving tea and teapot to take care of themselves.

The moment he reached his own room, he locked himself in. For a little while he stood holding by the chimney-piece, waiting to recover his breath. The moment he could move again, he opened his writing-desk on the table. "That for you, Mr. Pedgift and Son!" he said, with a snap of his fingers as he sat down. "I've got a son too!"

There was a knock at the door—a knock, soft, considerate, and confidential. The anxious landlady wished to know whether Mr. Bashwood was ill, and begged to intimate for the second time, that she earnestly trusted she had given him no offence.

"No! no!" he called through the door. "I'm quite well—I'm writing, ma'am, I'm writing—please to excuse me. She's a good woman; she's an excellent woman," he thought when the landlady had retired. "I'll make her a little present. My mind's so unsettled, I might never have thought of it but for her. Oh, if my boy is at the office still! Oh, if I can only write a letter that will make him pity me!"

He took up his pen, and sat thinking anxiously, thinking long, before he touched the paper. Slowly, with many patient pauses to think and think again, and with more than ordinary care to make his writing legible, he traced these lines:—

"MY DEAR JAMES,—You will be surprised, I am afraid, to see my handwriting. Pray don't suppose I am going to ask you for money, or to reproach you for having sold me out of house and home when you forfeited your security, and I had to pay. I am willing, and anxious, to let bygones be bygones, and to forget the past.

"It is in your power (if you are still at the Private Inquiry Office) to do me a great service. I am in sore anxiety and trouble, on the subject of a person in whom I am interested. The person is a lady. Please don't make game of me for confessing this, if you can help it. If you knew what I am now suffering, I think you would be more inclined to pity than to make game of me.

"I would enter into particulars, only I know your quick temper, and I fear exhausting your patience. Perhaps, it may be enough to say, that I have reason to believe the lady's past life has not been a very creditable one, and that I am interested—more interested than words can tell—in finding out what her life has really been, and in making the discovery within a fortnight from the present time.

"Though I know very little about the ways of business in an office like yours, I can understand that, without first having the lady's present address, nothing can be done to help me. Unfortunately, I am not yet acquainted with her present address. I only know that she went to town to-day, accompanied by a gentleman, in whose employment I now am, and who (as I believe) will be likely to write to me for money before many days more are over his head.

"Is this circumstance of a nature to help us? I venture to say 'us,' because I count already, my dear boy, on your kind assistance and advice. Don't let money stand between us—I have saved a little something, and it is all freely at your disposal. Pray, pray write to me by return of post! If you will only try your best to end the dreadful suspense under which I am now suffering, you will atone for all the grief

and disappointment you caused me in times that are past, and you will confer an obligation that he will never forget, on,

"Your affectionate Father,

"FELIX BASHWOOD."

After waiting a little, to dry his eyes, Mr. Bashwood added the date and address, and directed the letter to his son, at "The Private Inquiry Office, Shadyside Place, London." That done, he went out at once, and posted his letter with his own hands. It was then Monday; and, if the answer was sent by return of post, the answer would be received on Wednesday morning.

The interval day, the Tuesday, was passed by Mr. Bashwood in the steward's office at the great house. He had a double motive for absorbing himself as deeply as might be in the various occupations connected with the management of the estate. In the first place, employment helped him to control the devouring impatience with which he looked for the coming of the next day. In the second place, the more forward he was with the business of the office, the more free he would be to join his son in London, without attracting suspicion to himself by openly neglecting the interests placed under his charge.

Towards the Tuesday afternoon, vague rumours of something wrong at the cottage, found their way (through Major Milroy's servants) to the servants at the great house, and attempted ineffectually through this latter channel to engage the attention of Mr. Bashwood, impenetrably fixed on other things. The major and Miss Neelie had been shut up together in mysterious conference; and Miss Neelie's appearance after the close of the interview, plainly showed that she had been crying. This had happened on the Monday afternoon; and on the next day (that present Tuesday) the major had startled the household by announcing briefly that his daughter wanted a change to the air of the sea-side, and that he proposed taking her himself, by the next train, to Lowestoft. The two had gone away together, both very serious and silent, but both, apparently, very good friends, for all that. Opinions at the great house attributed this domestic revolution to the reports current on the subject of Allan and Miss Gwilt. Opinions at the cottage rejected that solution of the difficulty, on practical grounds. Miss Neelie had remained inaccessible shut up in her own room, from the Monday afternoon to the Tuesday morning when her father took her away. The major, during the same interval, had not been outside the door, and had spoken to nobody. And Mrs. Milroy, at the first attempt of her new attendant to inform her of the prevailing scandal in the town, had sealed the servant's lips by flying into one of her terrible passions, the instant Miss Gwilt's name was mentioned. Something must have happened, of course, to take Major Milroy and his daughter so suddenly from home—but that something was certainly not Mr. Armadale's scandalous elopement, in broad daylight, with Miss Gwilt.

The afternoon passed, and the evening passed, and no other event happened but the purely private and personal event which had taken place at the cottage. Nothing occurred (for nothing in the nature of things *could* occur) to dissipate the delusion on which Miss Gwilt had counted—the delusion which all Thorpe-Ambrose now shared with Mr. Bashwood, that she had gone privately to London with Allan, in the character of Allan's future wife.

On the Wednesday morning, the postman, entering the street in which Mr. Bashwood lived, was encountered by Mr. Bashwood himself, so eager to know if there was a letter for him, that he had come out without his hat. There *was* a letter for him—the letter that he longed for from his vagabond son.

These were the terms, in which Bashwood the younger answered his father's supplication for help—after having previously ruined his father's prospects for life:—

“Shadyside Place, Tuesday, July 29.

“MY DEAR DAD,—We have some little practice in dealing with mysteries at this office; but the mystery of your letter beats me altogether. Are you speculating on the interesting hidden frailties of some charming woman? Or, after *your* experience of matrimony, are you actually going to give me a stepmother at this time of day? Whichever it is, upon my life your letter interests me.

“I am not joking, mind,—though the temptation is not an easy one to resist. On the contrary, I have given you a quarter of an hour of my valuable time already. The place you date from sounded somehow familiar to me. I referred back to the memorandum book, and found that I was sent down to Thorpe-Ambrose to make private inquiries not very long since. My employer was a lively old lady, who was too sly to give us her right name and address. As a matter of course, we set to work at once, and found out who she was. Her name is Mrs. Oldershaw—and if you think of *her* for my stepmother, I strongly recommend you to think again before you make her Mrs. Bashwood.

“If it is not Mrs. Oldershaw, then all I can do, so far, is to tell you how you may find out the unknown lady's address. Come to town yourself, as soon as you get the letter you expect from the gentleman who has gone away with her (I hope he is not a handsome young man, for your sake); and call here. I will send somebody to help you in watching his hotel or lodging; and if he communicates with the lady, or the lady with him, you may consider her address discovered from that moment. Once let me identify her, and know where she is,—and you shall see all her charming little secrets as plainly as you see the paper on which your affectionate son is now writing to you

“A word more about the terms. I am as willing as you are to be friends again; but, though I own you were out of pocket by me once, I can't afford to be out of pocket by you. It must be understood that

you are answerable for all the expenses of the inquiry. We may have to employ some of the women attached to this office, if your lady is too wide-awake, or too nice-looking, to be dealt with by a man. There will be cab-hire, and postage-stamps—admissions to public amusements, if she is inclined that way—shillings for pew-openers, if she is serious, and takes our people into churches to hear popular preachers, and so on. My own professional services you shall have gratis; but I can't lose by you as well. Only remember that—and you shall have your way. Bygones shall be bygones, and we will forget the past.

“Your affectionate Son,

“JAMES BASHWOOD.”

In the ecstasy of seeing help placed at last within his reach, the father put the son's atrocious letter to his lips. “My good boy!” he murmured tenderly. “My dear, good boy!”

He put the letter down, and fell into a new train of thought. The next question to face was the serious question of time. Mr. Pedgift had told him Miss Gwilt might be married in a fortnight. One day of the fourteen had passed already, and another was passing. He beat his hand impatiently on the table at his side, wondering how soon the want of money would force Allan to write to him from London. “To-morrow?” he asked himself. “Or next day?”

The morrow passed; and nothing happened. The next day came—and the letter arrived! It was on business, as he had anticipated; it asked for money, as he had anticipated—and there, at the end of it, in a post-script, was the address added, concluding with the words, “You may count on my staying here till further notice.”

He gave one deep gasp of relief; and instantly busied himself—though there were nearly two hours to spare before the train started for London—in packing his bag. The last thing he put in was his blue satin cravat. “She likes bright colours,” he said, “and she may see me in it yet!”

An Australian's Impressions of England.

It is always interesting and often very useful to English readers to hear the opinions of intelligent foreigners with regard to their country and their society; and perhaps the first impressions of an Australian colonist, after twenty-five years' absence from Britain, may be worth a little attention. Those who, like myself, have left a provincial part of the mother-country when very young, and have grown up at the antipodes, must have as few preconceived ideas about England as any foreigner. Our knowledge has been hitherto derived from books and newspapers, or from conversations with new-comers or friends who have been on a visit to England, and is necessarily very incomplete; but at the same time we are of the old stock, born in Britain, and with a love and reverence for it greater than any American can possibly have. No spirit of rivalry or antagonism has ever arisen in any of the Australian colonies to prevent us from taking the kindest view of the mother-country. Although our political institutions are different, and our social distinctions less marked, we are still emphatically English; and it will take several generations before we can have a distinct national character of our own.

It may be asked what there can be to strike us as new or strange if we are so English in character? The character may be the same, but the circumstances are so different under which we have grown up, that we cannot help being surprised at much that we see and hear. In our case, we have an enormous territory sparsely peopled by an agricultural, pastoral, and mining population, with here and there a town or city built on the sea-coast for the sake of imports and exports, and here and there a township close to a gold field or a copper mine; and in the other case you have a small country dotted over with large and populous towns, connected together by a network of railways, and crowded with industrious workmen. With us we only produce the raw material, and all our efforts are directed towards producing it with the smallest amount of labour. With you all invention is on the stretch to make as much out of the raw material as possible, by labour and by machinery. In England all land is private property, and is in few hands. In Australia a great proportion of the land is unappropriated, and held by Government in trust for the people; and those portions of it which are sold are in many hands, and often transferred. In England you have enormous wealth side by side with great want. In Australia labour and the rewards of labour are more equally divided. With you the suffrage is limited, with us it is all but universal. Here you have a State church and many Dissenters; in Australia, or at least in that part of Australia in which I have grown up, there is

no endowment whatever given by the State to any religious denomination. Our climate is hot and dry, with no winter snows and no summer rains; our vegetation is different, our landscape scenery is different. So that, I think, it must be acknowledged that however English in character and feeling a colonist may be, he is likely to see much that will strike him as new when he visits England virtually for the first time in his life.

And the first thing that strikes him forcibly is the magnitude of the towns and cities, especially the enormous extent and population of London—not the first day or the second, but after living in it for a week or two, and seeing the miles of streets closely built and crowded with people in every direction. He, accustomed to think a great deal about the carriage of goods and about road difficulties, can scarcely conceive how such masses of people can possibly obtain their daily supplies of food and fuel, even by the bewildering number of railways that radiate from the great metropolis. He sees little signs of manufactures, and he wonders how these millions can get a living. Do they live off each other, or off the country in general? Do foreigners, colonists, and provincials all flock to London to be fleeced, that the city population may be supported? He feels as if England must be small indeed, to necessitate men to leave the healthful, breezy country, to crowd into the streets and courts and alleys of London, Manchester, Birmingham, and Glasgow. The contrast between the wealth and the poverty of England strikes him with a strange feeling of awe when he compares the hideous slums of London with the miles of streets in which no one can live on an income of less than a thousand, two thousand, five thousand pounds a year; or when, “in the season,” he contrasts the splendid equipages, the beautiful horses, the liveried servants, the perfectly appointed equestrians, the idle gentlemen, and the handsome and elegantly-dressed ladies in Hyde Park, with the ragged beggars whom he meets at every street-corner. And yet, painful as this is, how pleasant to an Australian home on a visit is London and London society. For the first time in his life he is at leisure to see everything and to enjoy everything; and for the first time in his life he finds other people who are as idle as himself, and with whom he can visit or travel, or merely saunter about London. It is only in London that one can find company in idleness or pleasure-seeking. In all the great manufacturing towns life is as busy and rather more anxious than it is in Australia or the United States; and in small provincial towns there is too much exclusiveness for Australians to penetrate into society when on a short visit.

The great beauty of the English landscape, its undulations, its softness, its wonderful variety of mountain, wood, and shore, impresses most favourably a visitor from our far south land. Its perpetual verdure contrasts with our pastures scorched up for many summer months. The exquisite changes in the tints of the foliage of your forest-trees—from those of spring, when the young leaves are “some very red, and some a glad light green,” as your oldest descriptive poet expresses it, to the luxuriant greenery of summer, and then to the mellow and russet tints of autumn—

are always full of interest to eyes long accustomed to evergreen trees, almost all of one genus, with long narrow pointed leaves. We have, nevertheless, many very handsome trees, and I think the first impression we have of your English trees is, that they are very small compared with ours; and if we land, as I did, in the end of winter, the leaflessness is painfully cheerless. They also strike us as different from ours in having been planted and cared for by the hand of man, for our forest-trees do not shoot up straight to the light, or throw out their branches symmetrically, as yours do; but as we watch the development of the first bud into the tender leaf and the full foliage and the autumn decay, these varieties seem to compensate for the months in which there is not a leaf on the trees. The variety of foliage, too, in the beech, the oak, the elm, the ash, the pine, the birch, the chestnut, the lime, and the various firs and pines, makes us desire that we could add as many varieties to our gum-trees and wattles, and our stringy-bark forests. Although no country of equal extent has such a variety of natural scenery as Great Britain, had she trusted merely to her indigenous trees, the landscape of to-day would have much less beauty, and the gardens would have shown a very different list of fruit-trees. We Australians have imported and cultivated, with even greater success than in Europe, the vine, the orange, the peach, nectarine, plum, apricot, apple and pear, the fig, the almond, the olive, the loquat, the mulberry, and the cherry-tree, and under certain favouring conditions, we can grow the strawberry, the raspberry, and the English currant; so that though nature gives us scarcely one edible fruit in all the vast island of Australia, it is the very paradise of fruit through the cultivation of what we can import. And I hope that we shall add your forest-trees to ours with as much success.

To our eyes, accustomed to great stretches of plain and great ranges of hills, the undulations, the valleys, the small mountain ranges, the narrow belts of trees planted for shelter, or by way of ornament, the green hedgerows interspersed with occasional trees, the beauty of the numerous rivers and of their banks, the great extent of sea-shore, with all the various aspects of the coast—sandy, shingly, or rocky, and often green to the water's edge, give us constant and great enjoyment. Above all things, we admire your rivers, your lakes, and your mountain streams. Even the recent exceptionally hot and dry summer is moist compared to what I have been accustomed to; and it is a curious coincidence that the last Australian summer has been the longest and the driest known for very many years. Engaged in a perpetual warfare with the dryness of our climate, with a long summer, frequently rainless for many months together even in our most favoured districts, and in the interior sometimes rainless for eighteen months at a time, and with our water-courses often quite dried up in summer, and our rivers frequently lost in sandy plains before reaching the sea, we turn to your perennial streams with an admiration you can scarcely understand. In all landscapes, whether on canvas or in nature, we prefer those where there is

fresh water to be seen. The sense of utility intensifies the sense of beauty.

But, on the other hand, the careful cultivation of Britain, the utilization of every little bit of land (even the narrow ridges on the sides of the railways), the rarity of commons or waste land, gives us a painful impression. We feel cribbed and cabined and confined. Colonial children rarely like England; they do not like every place to be private property not to be trespassed over. There is no doubt that the concentration of all the landed property in the kingdom into few hands, appears a much greater evil to those who have grown up in such a country as Australia than to those who have all their lives seen nothing else. Although I am not so much of a Radical as to suggest a division of property, I must say that I think every facility should be given to the transfer of land, and that some step should be taken to prevent the inheritance of colossal fortunes. In no country should there be any limit placed to what a man may acquire by industry and abstinence, but as to what he may inherit, I think a line may be drawn. Is it really for the benefit of a country, or for the good of the individual, that a fortune of two or three millions should be left to one man, or even to two or three?

In your England an agricultural labourer, working from the earliest days, when he is worth sixpence a week to frighten the crows, till he is worn out at sixty, earns in all his life about 800*l.*, or at the utmost, 1,000*l.* This is the money-worth of his life's work. There are proprietors and millionnaires who have as much as that for every day of their lives without doing anything in the world for it, or, at least, without needing to do anything. No doubt, under such a system, England has grown up a very great country; science and art and invention and literature have all been encouraged, but the question arises, would it not have been a greater country and a happier country if there had not been such an enormous disparity of conditions?

This state of things cannot but strike a colonist more forcibly than it strikes a foreigner, for most Europeans have grown up under a similar system, and in many old countries the contrast between the two ends of society is as marked as in England. The wealth of England is certainly a surprising thing to any stranger; but I believe that continental visitors are most impressed with the great numbers and great importance of the middle class,—those with incomes of between five hundred and fifteen hundred a year, while we are most surprised at the large landed proprietors and the commercial millionnaires. The middle class, and especially the "upper middle" class, is a most valuable element in the population; all the more so because it is a fluctuating element, a class which it is comparatively easy to rise to or to fall from. There are very few landed estates of that value in England, and that small number is on the decrease, so that the income I speak of is derived generally from business or from stock or funded property, which is easily transferred. When such an income comes to be divided amongst a man's family, they must either work to supplement it, or fall

in social position and let others rise. If it is derived from a salary, of course it stops with a man's life, and unless the family have a business or a salary of their own they must fall. This is and will be the position of all our upper classes in Australia, for though there is no hindrance to making wills in any way, neither law nor custom favours the rights of primogeniture either for land or for personal property, and land is as easily transferred as Bank stock. We are likely to have few large fortunes and many moderate ones, and it is to be hoped that the labouring classes will, in the earlier days of the colonies, become habituated to a standard of comfort that they will not willingly fall from. I should be sorry to see the working man and his family worse fed, worse clothed, or worse lodged than he is at present in Australia, and I should hope that the opportunities of rising from his class will continue to be as frequent as now, and be a permanent spur to legitimate ambition—not one chance in ten thousand, but something a great deal more attainable than that. It is the high rate of profits rather than the high rate of wages that has been such a boon to the working classes in our country, for all savings could be easily invested in land or in building societies, so as to produce from ten to twenty per cent.; so that the inducement to save was much greater than here, where savings-banks' interest is very small, and where co-operation is still but imperfectly understood. The thing that astonishes us is how working people in Britain can bring up a family and save anything for old age, and there is no doubt that to do it they must practise a minute economy that is most creditable to them.

With us, all our ingenuity is directed to the economy of labour; with you, though you certainly do multiply your hands marvellously by the employment of machinery in manufactories, in all your rural pursuits the efforts of the farmer are directed towards the economy of land. To this end he is lavish of labour and of capital. Perhaps in no country in the world is there so great an extent of land cultivated with so few hands employed in it as in the colony of South Australia, which is the granary of the south land. There are four acres under tillage for every man, woman, and child in the colony—and not a sixth part of the male population engaged in it; making about one adult male for eighty acres of land. The crops are what would be called very short, but it is better for us to have half crops than to bestow double labour on them; and with the reaping machine to take our wheat off the ground, with cheap land, and with a market for our surplus grain in the adjoining colonies, the farmer finds that an average crop of fourteen bushels per acre pays him very well.

By-and-by as the world advances, and our population increases, we must change our tactics, and bestow more careful cultivation on our land, particularly as, though we have great extent of territory, we have limitations as to arable land. In the vast interior of Australia there are tracts which may feed flocks and herds, with, on the whole, tolerable success, but which can never be available for agriculture, for there is no certainty of rains. In some seasons the tropical rains from the north

extend so far south, and in some seasons the winter rains from the Southern Ocean extend so far north, but in many years Central Australia has no rain at all.

The quantity of enclosed land under pasture in England strikes an Australian as enormous, and proves to him, without any reference to statistics, that a very large proportion of the grain supplied for feeding the people must come from abroad. It is right and natural that it should be so. If England is the workshop of the world, if there are manufactured for other nations those articles of utility, comfort, and luxury which they cannot as well fabricate for themselves, it is a natural consequence that these work-people should draw their food from foreign countries. Britain has a population far beyond what she can feed, let her strain all the resources of scientific agriculture to the utmost. To me there appears something perilous in the position. I do not say that my alarm is well grounded, but it is natural for an inhabitant of a great food-exporting country to feel so. Observing the intense anxiety felt by the inhabitants of the Midland counties about the supplies of coal, and hearing the calculations that are often made as to how long it will hold out at the present enormous rate of consumption, I could not help concluding that upon this hinged, in an enormous degree, the present pre-eminence of Britain, and that a very large number of the superabundant population are in fact living upon this coal, and on what can be made of it. Science may probably discover a new heat-generator before the coal is worked out, but it is not likely that the new parent of force will be so exclusively English as its coal-mines. It may be one in which our Australian inferiority is not so marked, and consequently make us more favourably situated for manufactures than we are now. This may not come till long after our day, but I am so much accustomed to look forward a few generations for the future of our own colony, that the old habit clings to me; and wherever I turn I see so many instances of the economy of land, so many proofs of its enormous money-value, so much care taken of it, and of all that can be supposed to increase its productive powers, that it is impossible for me to overlook that greatest of all distinctions between the new country and the old.

Perhaps nothing on the surface of society strikes a colonist more than the number of old people whom he meets. In travelling about in various ways, in public gatherings for any purpose, and in general visiting society, the number of grey heads is remarkable. It is not because England, as compared with Australia, is more conducive to longevity (though I believe that will be found to be the case, in a great measure, when our colonies are old enough to draw the comparison fairly), but because our colonies as a rule were settled and reinforced by young people, and thirty years is too short a period for our old people to appear numerous.

And the next thing that strikes a stranger like myself, who goes a good deal about, and visits both his own friends and relatives and colonial friends' friends, is the extraordinary varieties of society he meets with in

England. I think on the whole that this is the most remarkable feature in England. I do not speak of business life, I believe that is the same all over the world; a merchant in London may do more business, but he conducts it on the same principle as one in Sydney, or Paris, or New York. Shopkeeping is the same thing here as at the antipodes, and the learned professions are conducted after the same fashion; but I speak of the family life, the social life, the life which men and women lead together and which women lead by themselves, and where we see the characters, the tastes, and the hobbies that do not come out in the shop, the office, or the factory.

The extent of this variety is rarely seen by foreigners, or by American travellers. As a rule, those who are able to write books on England, have already attained some celebrity, and in virtue of this, they go from one circle where people of literary or scientific eminence associate to another of the same sort, and very rarely meet with the average commonplace Englishman or Englishwoman, who nevertheless is a most important element in the country. They perhaps neglect to describe such of them as they do see; they naturally wish to note only what is distinguished and uncommon, and their book gains in piquancy while it loses a little in absolute fidelity. Then, again, a clever writer is apt to be lionized, and treated with apparently frank hospitality, but yet with real reserve.

But though a colonist of long standing, I have not been long enough away to have no home in England, and my relations have not forgotten me, so that I have them to visit; and we make a practice of visiting our friends' friends, and will go a good deal out of our way to take a parcel, or a message, or a full, true, and particular account of friends long settled in Australia, with children growing up about them, to the loving relatives whom they left in the old country. All the reserve which is said to be a national characteristic (though I must say I have seen none of it,) melts away like snow in sunshine before such an introduction. We get to the heart of the family at once. They wish us to see as much as they can show us of their daily life, that we may carry back as faithful a picture as we bring; and even their fixed conviction that everything is, and must be, better in England than in Australia, makes them more frank.

You enter one circle, and you are in the heart of that large world known as the religious world. You see it in the books on the table, you hear it in the conversation; and the visitors and the engagements of the family are all of one class.

You enter another, and you are in the scientific world. Papa's spare hours are devoted to the prosecution of some branch of science, or some invention which is dearer to him than his daily work. Some part, often a very large part, of his family sympathizes with him and works with him; and he surrounds himself with those books and men who are congenial to his researches.

You go to another, and find a number of people living for society—in town going out four or five nights a week, besides doing a good deal in

the way of luncheon-parties and flower-show fêtes, and, as a general rule, going everywhere to see and to be seen; and in the country, unable to exist without the aid of picnics, water parties, croquet parties, and volunteer reviews.

You may next, through a letter of introduction, drop into the very heart of all sorts of philanthropic movements, and there you meet with a variety of people each with his or her panacea for the existing evils of society. One says, Educate the people; another, Wash them and give them decent homes; another says, Give votes to the people, and raise them so that they will educate and provide for themselves. One works for children, another labours in prisons, a third visits workhouses. Here we see a man spending his life, or all of it that he can spare from the earning of his own living, in the education of poor children on a principle of his own; there a woman giving all her life to the reformation of juvenile criminals, and another to the relief and assistance of distressed governesses. The more this class of workers do, the more they appear to disclose that needs to be done; and one feels doubtful whether such great evils can be combated altogether by the noble efforts of so active a body of volunteers, and whether a little Government legislation would not enable them to work with more benefit to the world. But if anything could tempt me to remain in England, it is that I, too, might aid a little in such work.

The class I speak of now is most antagonistic to that passed last under review; they entertain a great mutual contempt of each other. The society girls and the society gentlemen despise the active philanthropists as being ill-dressed, strong-minded, and most fatiguing; they are sure that they have dreadful quarrels amongst themselves, and that the women are, or are to be, all old maids. The philanthropists, on the other hand, despise the objectless, frivolous existence, pity the restlessness, and cannot even see the prettiness of the fluttering butterflies. And yet they are very pretty: their dress costs them more thought than anything else in the world, and certainly costs their parents a great deal of money; but it is pretty after all. If they quarrel among themselves, which I have no doubt they do as much as the strong-minded ladies do, it is a matter of less concern to the world in general, and so it is not heard of.

Your next visit may be to quiet people, who are a world to themselves. You see there simple domestic life, and hear nothing about gay parties, or science, or politics, or progress, or woman's rights, or religious movements in whatever direction. You would scarcely think that any public events took place at all; for though Paterfamilias reads the newspaper, he never talks of it. Mamma looks after her servants, who give her a good deal of trouble; the girls do faucy-work, have each a friend—the sweetest girl in the world—and are very glad to play a game of croquet with any one; and the young men are far more tiresome than the girls, inasmuch as a lack of ideas in them is more intolerable in the sex which has had the greater advantages.

Again, you may meet with a circle of people who are devoted to art,

who are great admirers of some kinds of poetry, and who have travelled a great deal. In such a circle an Australian feels his deficiencies very much. He has no picture-galleries at home; he does not know what to admire or how to express his admiration, and often makes distressing blunders in the opinion he gives. Though he may have taken long bush rides, and made narrow escapes from death by thirst or starvation, he has not travelled in their sense of the word, for he has not seen any antiquities, or stood on any world-renowned height to view a classical land.

Again, your next acquaintance may be among that intelligent public for whom authors write their books, and to whom discoverers and inventors address themselves; not the average Englishman, but one far above him; the man whom superficial thinkers call commonplace, but in reality the man who keeps commonplace people from stifling everything that is new and original. He does not himself write or invent, but his apprehension is quick, his judgment calm and clear, and the opinions which Smith, Brown, and Jones would never adopt from books, partly because they do not read them and partly because they cannot understand them, they are often forced to accept, because a sensible man like Robinson offers them in a palatable form, and in quantities which they can swallow and digest at once. Such men as Robinson (good men of business, who provide for their families, and do a little charitable work unostentatiously) never come before the public in any way, so that we cannot ascertain how numerous they are in Britain. We can only guess that they are on the increase, by observing that a new idea makes more rapid way now than formerly. The author of a book or an essay, who tries to popularize ideas, either of his own or of some greater mind, by writing as clearly and as brilliantly as possible, and introducing familiar illustrations, in hopes of reaching Smith, Brown, Jones, and Robinson by it, fancies when his opinion is received, his discovery accepted, or his suggestions adopted, that he has reached them all; whereas he has only convinced Robinson, and through him he influences the others. Those who write are apt to magnify their office, and have great facilities for doing so; but, for my part, I feel we cannot be grateful enough, and England cannot be grateful enough, to the intelligent reader. We need him everywhere; in town he is valuable, but in provincial society he is invaluable. It is supposed that the essence of provincialism is the exaggerated idea people have of their own importance, and the intense interest they take in their neighbours' affairs, and that you can escape these things in a city; but the provincial mind can be provincial even in London, and only exchanges its curiosity about the events of the village or the neighbourhood for curiosity as to the affairs of its own set, which to that class of minds is the world. The domestic arrangements, the love affairs, and the money matters of other people, can be as interesting in London as at Land's End. An engagement entered into or broken off, or a last will and testament, perhaps, furnishes a topic of conversation for a longer time in the country, but it can be dwelt upon very sufficiently anywhere. I

used to fancy that we, in Australia, thought too much about money, and made it too much our object of existence, but I believe conversation runs more on money in England than with us. The manner in which young people speak of *unearned* money—of what may be left by relations, or what may be gained by an advantageous marriage, and not of what can be earned by industry, or saved by economy, strikes me painfully. There is a sadly worldly tone in the manner in which the sacred subjects of death and marriage are discussed. In a new country, like ours, girls very rarely have any money, and young men are generally the architects of their own fortunes; marriage takes place at an earlier age, and need not be so very carefully weighed beforehand as it must be in England. We have here and there an old maid, but the mass of our women are wives and mothers, and too full of domestic duties, either to have the high cultivation or the desire for a wider field, which we see so general among middle-class educated Englishwomen.

But I have not space to enumerate all the various phases which English society offers. There is the political world, where one really hears about parties, and divisions, and patronage, and Government influence. There is the literary world, where one would fancy people were only born for the purpose of reading books, and where there is as much interest felt in the affairs of the set, as in the provinces one sees taken in those of the parish. There is the sporting world, which comes out strong in conversation at certain times of the year. There is the agricultural world, the manufacturing world, with its one employer, and its thousands of operatives. There are Englishmen, whose business and associations are with foreign countries, and there are foreigners whose business is all with English.

In each of the circles which I mention, a colonist feels the limitation of his stock of general information. His own life is various, but its very variety prevents him from carrying out any branch to the perfection which he sees in England. Although he may observe, read, and reflect a good deal, he has not had either the leisure or the opportunities to enable him to cope with those who have made one thing the study of their lives. But if we can appreciate and admire the thoroughness of the leaders of English intellect in all its departments, we may get some credit with them for our quick though superficial intelligence, and our adaptability to circumstances. The definite daily work, for instance, which our colonial women have to do, if it prevents them from being devoted to literature, to art, or to philanthropy, brings out an amount of common sense and consideration for others which is too apt to be wanting among the many thousands in England who have no taste strong enough to become a pursuit, and who on leaving school find that there is nothing for them to do. I certainly think that the position of the larger proportion of unmarried women in the United Kingdom is a most unenviable one, and I would submit for many generations to the discomfort of having a short supply of domestic servants in Australia, rather than take from our

middle-class women their present multifarious occupations, until some other or better career is opened to them.

One consequence of our high wages is, that we do not see anywhere the exquisite finish and completeness in our domestic arrangements that you have in England. We have some very handsome and well-furnished houses in Australia, but it is the little details, the little conveniences, the many arrangements made that the family should be saved any avoidable trouble or annoyance that must strongly impress a colonist. I think it is very likely that we in Australia will have a taste for sumptuous furniture and appointments and equipages, but I do not think we can ever come up to the old country in the little details which give completeness. From our wealthy class not being a permanent class, we are never likely to have the old-established magnificence, the collections of pictures handed down from father to son, and added to by each generation, the ancestral woods, the beautifully-kept pleasure-grounds; so that, to see these things, our young Australians must visit Europe, and, in the visit, let us hope that they will learn somewhat beyond pleasing the eye.

I, gathering my ideas of England hitherto almost exclusively from books, have had to rectify and modify many of them on closer knowledge. I do not see, for instance, that England is filled by tuft-hunters and match-makers, by worldly parents and calculating children. There is a good deal more regard paid to appearances and to position, and, as I think, a more concentrated love of money here than in the colonies; but I believe these things are rather on the wane than on the increase. The real goodness of England is not to be seen in a superficial glance through what is called society, but in the homes of the people. I am satisfied that English society is sound at the core, and that it is neither heartless nor altogether conventional.

From the liberal manner in which the opinions and customs of other nations are now considered, and from the great patience with which I have often been listened to when talking about the affairs of an obscure and distant colony, I am convinced that England is losing her insular character, and that, to quote Chaucer again, "gladly will she learn and gladly teach." This openness of character will, in time, root out old national jealousies, and it will still more endear the old country to the far outabouts who are already sufficiently disposed to be proud of their descent.

The Ancient Fenians and Fenian Literature.

HITHERTO there has been but little interest taken in Celtic history. Late events, however, have excited a certain degree of curiosity about a very remote period of the Celtic history of the sister island. Who are the Fenians? has been in almost every mouth. Who the Fenians *are* it is not easy to define: who the Fenians *were* any Irish scholar can easily explain. They were a number of tribes or men kept as a standing army, or military caste, solely for purposes of war in Celtic Ireland about a couple of centuries before the conversion of that country to Christianity.

We must begin at the beginning. Respectable Irish history, commencing with the *S'ann Tosach* of Genesis, usually starts with the account of the coming of the daughters of Adam to Ireland, with an exactness of detail interesting, but hardly credible. We, however, cannot even go so far back as Noah; time and space forbid. The ancient history of Ireland divides conveniently enough into four great periods. The first of these extends from no one knows what time to the Christian era, and includes the invasions and occupations of the country by the Firbolgs, Nemedians, Tuatha De Danann, whoever they were, devils or Druids, and lastly Milesians; all which are mythical, but standing on a basis of facts very hard to get at now. The second period is less mythical, and, embracing men and things of which we have historical knowledge in addition to legendary accounts and local mementoes, stretches from the beginning of the Christian era until the conversion of the country to Christianity—from the first to the fifth century. This might justly be termed the heroic or romantic period of Hiberno-Celtic history. In it Conn of the Hundred Battles, and Niall of the Nine Hostages, lived and fought; in it flourished Finn Mac Cumhaill, Osgar, and Ossian, the heroes of Irish romance. The next, or the Christian period—from the fifth to the ninth century—was that in which religion and learning flourished: then Ireland obtained her most noble name, *Insula Sanctorum*. From the ninth century the Danes made continual attacks on the country; they pillaged the colleges and churches, burnt the houses, killed the inmates, and (as they said themselves) *drowned* the books (in the rivers). As in England, they gained, and for a short time held, undisputed sovereignty in the country: often vanquished, they were never completely extirpated. A colony of them remained in Dublin, governed by a prince of their own, somewhat in the same manner as their compatriots had held Northumberland. At the end of this period the Norman flood that had deluged England overflowed into Ireland, and submerged “the leavings of the Danes,”—the last remnants of Celtic civilization and religion. Thus ends the ancient history of Ireland.

There are then four periods : the mythic, extending to the Christian era ; the heroic, from the beginning of Christianity until the conversion of the country to Christianity—four centuries ; the Christian, from the conversion of the country until the beginning of the Danish incursions—three centuries ; and the dark or Danish period, which extended to the Norman or English invasion in the twelfth century—three centuries. We can now see whereabouts we are. We have only to do with the heroic, or, as it is sometimes called, the Fenian period of Irish history.

There have been many derivations given for the name *Fiana*, from which the English form, Fenians, is easily deduced ; but the only one which seems to us to be worthy of a moment's consideration is that which derives the name *Fiana* from *Fionn*, or *Finn*, the name of their most celebrated chieftain. The word *Fiana*, and the English Fenian from its genitive, means neither more nor less than "Finn's men," or "the people of Finn." This Finn is the same whom Macpherson has dubbed Fingal, and whom the modern Irish call Finn Mac Cool. In ancient writings he is styled Finn Mac Cumhaill, after his father, Cumhall (*pr.* Coole). The name *Fiana*, or Fenians, was given, as we have said before, by ancient writers to a number of the Celtic tribes of Ireland which were permanently kept on military service, and had in return a certain allowance of the public lands, and some peculiar privileges. They were the military caste, so to speak, at one time in Celtic Ireland. The chieftainship of them seems to have been hereditary in certain families, and by the names of those families they were usually denominated. Those of Connaught, for instance, were called the Clann of Morna. There seems to have been a tribe or body of them attached to each provincial kingdom. The chief of those at Tara had the command of all, and he himself was under the immediate orders of the monarch. This functionary, often called the King of the Fenians, had great influence, and sometimes thwarted and even resisted the royal power *vi et armis*. The Fenians of Tara and those of Connaught make the greatest figure in history ; of those of Ulster and Munster, there is comparatively little recorded. In the institution of the Fenians, we have the same phenomenon which presents itself to us in almost every community in the tribe state. Some tribes, or members of tribes, devote themselves to war, and take or receive from the rest, support and honour, and have sometimes developed into a pure caste, as in India. This did not take place in Ireland. Like other great military orders of history, the Prætorian Guards and the Janissaries, they became too powerful for the royal authority, and were in consequence crushed by it on the first favourable opportunity. A rivalry existing between two divisions of the Fenian body, and taken advantage of by the ruler, effected its destruction, and Celtic Ireland was saved from the curse of a military caste. The *Book of Ballymote*—a book compiled about 1391—mentions (Ossianic Soc. vol. v. p. 210) Cumhall as head of the Fenians circa A.D. 190. This Cumhall, father of the great Finn, was slain by one of the Clann of

Morna, or Connaught Fenians, whence arose an undying hatred and continual rivalry between them and the Clann of Baigae, to which Cumhall belonged. Finn was chief of the Fenians in the reign of Cormac the Great. He seems to have brought the organization to its greatest perfection, and he was able by his commanding talents at least to smother up the elements of discord during his life. The contention between the two great clans broke out again after his death, and ultimately caused the destruction of the force. Of Finn, Pinkerton says, in his *Inquiry into the History of Scotland* (Ossianic Soc. vol. v. p. 210), that "he seems to have been a man of great talents for the age, and of celebrity in arms. His formation of a regular standing army, in which all Irish accounts agree, seems to have been a rude imitation of the Roman legions in Britain. The idea, though simple enough, shows prudence, for such a force alone could have coped with the Romans had they invaded Ireland." Keating, the historian, gets very solemn over Finn and his Fenians. He says :—"From this Fionn, the established militia of the kingdom were called *Fiana Eirionn*; and if it should be asserted, either through ignorance or prejudice, that there were no such standing body of troops in the island as those trained bands, to evince the contrary, let it be considered that this part of history is supported by evidence not to be opposed. In some records, which treat of the old militia of Ireland, it is asserted that they were a body of men so strong, and so tall of stature, as is really incredible; for it is certain, though they were a brave and undaunted number of troops, yet the size of their persons did not exceed the common proportion of those times. Their business was to guard the country against foreign or domestic enemies, to support the right and succession of their kings, and to be ready at the shortest notice, upon any surprise or emergency of the State. They were to watch the sea-coasts, and to have a strict eye upon the creeks and havens of the island, lest any pirates should be lurking there, to plunder the country, and infest the inhabitants; and they were established for the same purpose as a standing body of forces are kept up in any nation—to defend it from invasion, to support the right and prerogatives of the crown, and to secure the liberty and property of the people." What more could Keating have given them to do?

We must, however, return to Finn. He married one daughter of King Cormac after he had failed to get another, Grainné, who eloped when she heard of his intentions towards her. One of the best of the Celtic romances is the Elopement of Grainné with Dermuid. This Dermuid was a young and good-looking young officer of the Fenians, for whom the princess took a sudden fancy when she found out that Finn was coming to ask her in marriage in his old age, of which, however, more hereafter. Finn is the great hero of this period. At the present day he gets the credit of making or using almost every great natural curiosity in the whole land. It is said that he made the Giant's Causeway as a highway to Scotland. His profile is to be seen on many mountain outlines. He

has increased in size and physical importance every century since his death, whilst his intellectual greatness has been forgotten. From being an ordinary mortal with an extraordinary brain, he has developed, in the imaginations of the people, into a giant—a mere physical monstrosity, and (how are the mighty fallen!)—into a bugbear for naughty children. There is hardly a hill-side in Ireland that does not preserve a legend of him. Of all Irishmen he is the best known to tourists—they meet him everywhere. Finn, however, perished at last—as even the heroic must do. He was treacherously slain on the bank of the river Boyne, when unarmed and unattended. The following is the notice of his death in the great *Annals of Ireland* by the Four Masters:—

“Age of Christ, 283, the sixteenth year of Cairbre:—Finn, grandson of Baisgne, fell by Aichleach, son of Duibdreann, and the sons of Uirgreann of the Luaighui Teamhrach (Tara) at Ath-Brea, upon the Boinn, of which it was said,—

Finn was killed—it was with darts,
With a lamentable wound :
Aichleach, son of Duibhdreann, cut off
The head of the son of Mochtamun (i.e.
Finn).

Were it not that Caoilté took revenge,
It would have been a victory over all his
true battles :
The three were cut off by him,
Exulting over the royal champion.”

This King Cairbre, surnamed “of the Liffey,” was a son and a successor of Cormac above mentioned. He, after Finn's death, disbanded^a and outlawed the Clann of Baisgne, hitherto the most powerful division of the Fenians, and that to which the commanders had belonged, retaining in his service the Clann of Morna, the Fenians of Connaught. Thus exiled, they repaired to the dominions of the King of Munster, Mogha-Corb, who was a grandson of Finn. He espoused their cause and retained them in his service, contrary to the orders of his supreme king, the monarch. This brought on a war, and a bloody battle was fought at Gaura between the monarch and the King of Munster, in which the monarch lost his life by the hand of a man whom he had driven into exile, and the two great clans of the Fenians slaughtered each other almost to extermination. Whence the very next entry in the *Annals* is:—

“Age of Christ, 284 :—After Cairbre Liffcachair (‘of the Liffey’) had been seventeen years in the sovereignty of Ireland, he fell in the battle of Gabhra-Aichle (‘Gaura’) by the hand of Semeon, son of Cearb, (one) of the Fotharta: Fearcorb (‘Mogha-Corb’), the son of Cormac Cas (‘King of Munster who married Finn's daughter’), having brought the Fiana with him, against the king, to defend Leath-Mhogha (‘the southern half of Ireland’) against him.”

Thus ends the history of the Fiana or Fenians, and thus the monarch died, not, however, until he had slain in single combat Osgar their commander. The legends still existing about the Fenians and their great chief are numberless. It is said that there were in times of peace three battalions of them, which could be increased to seven when the necessities of war required, each battalion numbering three thousand men.

Keating says, that before a man was enrolled, he had to subscribe to several articles, curious enough in all conscience :—" The first, that when he was disposed to marry, he should not follow the mercenary custom of insisting upon a portion with a wife ; but, without regard to her fortune, he should choose a woman for her virtue, her courtesy, and good manners ; the second, that he should never offer violence to a woman, or attempt to ravish her ; the third, that he would be charitable and relieve the poor who desired meat and drink, as far as his abilities would permit ; and the fourth, that he would not turn his back or refuse to fight with nine men of any other nation that set upon him, and offered to fight with him." It is surely no wonder that the modern Irish are so pugnacious and so fond of a row, when their ancestors were willing to fight against such odds rather than miss a good shindy. We must, however, go back to the Fiana. Keating says that there were several rules to be observed in the admission of recruits to the Fenian ranks. The parents must give up all right to revenge or compensation for the candidate's death, a very necessary regulation in a state of society when the punishment for a death was either revenge or *eric*. He must be able to compose verses. He must be expert with his weapons, and he was exposed to a very good test—he had to defend himself from the javelins of nine soldiers thrown at him at once. He was obliged to run through a wood pursued by some of the Fenians, in order to test his fleetness and agility. He must be able to hold his weapon without shaking ; if his hand shook he was rejected. He must be so swift and so light of foot as not to break a rotten stick by treading upon it ; and, hardest of all to do, he must be able, without stopping or lessening his speed, to draw a thorn out of his foot. We would very much like to see the crowd who call themselves by the ancient name of Fenians trying these tests ; very few of them, indeed, would pass muster. Many people now hear for the first time of the emblem called " the sun-burst of Erin." The innocent original for this now treasonable device, was Finn Mac Cumhail's standard.

In addition to the legends still existing amongst the people there is a great mass of MS. in the great libraries of Ireland taken up with the exploits of Finn and the Fenians. O'Curry, in his analysis of existing Celtic MSS. (Lectures on the MS. Materials of Irish History), makes a division of them into five principal classes, viz. : the Annals ; the Books of Genealogies and Pedigrees ; the Historic Tales ; the Imaginative Tales and Poems, and the Ecclesiastical Writings. The fourth of these divisions, the Imaginative Tales and Poems, are mainly about the Fenian period, and have for their subject Finn and the Fenian heroes. Whence they are often called Fenian Tales and Poems, and still oftener Fenian Tales and Ossianic Poems. O'Curry says, " The purely imaginative literature of the ancient Gaedhils still existing in MSS. which have been handed down to us in safety, may be divided into distinct classes, some of which are compositions yet more ancient than the others. The earliest of all—if we regard merely the authors to whom they are attributed

—are the poems or metrical tales called the Fenian Poems, many of which are attributed to Oisín (Ossian) and Fergus, the sons of Finn Mac Cumhaill, some of them to Finn himself, and some to his cousin Caoilté. After these may be placed the prose recitals, probably founded on similar poems now lost, but probably also themselves compositions of as early a date; I mean those stories commonly called Fenian Tales. Finally, after the Fenian poems and tales, in point of date, we find a great number of romantic legends and tales, both in prose and verse, many of which were certainly composed at a very remote period, but of which the various dates of composition extend down almost to our own times. And it is within my own memory that in Clare, and throughout Munster, the invention and recital of such romantic tales continue to afford a favourite delight to the still Gaedhlic-speaking people." He considers the MS. tales of later than the twelfth century, of comparatively little value. He divides the more ancient into four classes; the first, comprising those ascribed directly to the Fenian chiefs, Finn, Oisín, Fergus and Caoilté; the second, consisting of tracts made up of articles in prose and verse, ascribed to some one of the same personages, but related by a second person; the third, containing miscellaneous poems, descriptive of passages in the life of Finn and his warriors, but not ascribed to any author; and the fourth, consisting of certain tales in a romantic style relating to the same. To Finn are ascribed five existing poems, to Oisín but two, which can be traced so far back as the twelfth century, to Fergus "the eloquent," one, and to Caoilté one. To the second class belongs the "Dialogue of the Ancient Men," viz. Oisín and Caoilté, who, the legend states, outlived the rest of the Fenian chiefs, and even conversed with St. Patrick, and related to him the exploits of the Fenians. The third class are often called "Ossianic," since the legend gives them as conversations between Ossian and St. Patrick about the Fenians. As a specimen of these poems, we give a few stanzas from the opening of the well-known "Lamentation of Oisín after the Fenians." (Ossianic Soc. vol. iii. p. 280.)

Alas ! O Fionn of the Fenians and of the
hosts !
O Oscar of the fight, my son !
Are ye living, or in what land,
Whilst Oisín is without action or
strength ?

Alas ! I am a withered old man,
Lacking food, drink, and sleep ;
Suffering the oppression of Patrick and
his clerics,
In pitiful want and gloom.

Alas ! it is a piteous tale,
That I am now hidden from the Fenians :
Listening to the drowsy notes of a bell,
I grieve now, and rejoice not.

Alas ! O tribe of the mighty battles,
Great was your love of valour once :
Whither is your rightful nature gone,
That ye care not whether it be well with
Oisín ?

Alas ! sorrowful is my end,
Since I have lost my strength and vigour ;
Without the chase, without music by me,
Whilst I muse on the beauty of the men.

Alas ! whither go the men that were
mighty,
That they come not to succour me ?
O Oscar, of the sharp blades of victory,
Come and release thy father from this
bondage.

Oisín then goes on to bewail his hard fate, living on the pitiful dole of

Patrick and his clergy, and compares his present woeful plight with his former condition as a Fenian chief. The last class of Fenian literature recognized by Professor O'Curry is the Fenian tales. One of the most celebrated of these is the one before mentioned, the Elopement of Dermuid and Grainné. Finn, in his old age, wants a wife, and is recommended the king's daughter, the princess Grainné, but not being on good terms with King Cormac, is afraid that he would get a refusal if he made a personal application, so he sends two of his friends to ask Cormac. Cormac has no objection; but as Grainné had upset all previous arrangements of the same kind, and Cormac had got the blame, he would have nothing to do in the matter, but told them to apply to the princess herself. She told the king her father, "If he be a fitting son-in-law for thee, why should he not be a fitting husband and mate for me?" Finn and his retinue come to Tara, and are right royally received. A splendid banquet is laid out, at which the princess herself is present: getting a certain Druid beside her, she finds out from him the purpose of the visit and the names of the principal Fenians at the banquet (*Ossianic Soc.* vol. iii. p. 49). "There sat there a Druid and a skilful man of knowledge of the people of Fionn before Grainné, the daughter of Cormac, that is, Daire 'of the poems,' son of Morna; and it was not long before there arose gentle talking and mutual discourse between himself and Grainné. Then Daire arose and stood before Grainné, and sang her the songs and the verses and the sweet poems of her fathers and of her ancestors; and then Grainné spoke and asked the Druid,—'What is the thing or matter wherefore Fionn is come to this place to-night?'

"If thou knowest not that,' said the Druid, 'it is no wonder that I know it not.'

"I desire to learn it of thee,' said Grainné.

"Well then,' quoth the Druid, 'it is to ask thee as wife and mate that Fionn is come to this place to-night.'

"It is a great marvel to me,' said Grainné, 'that it is not for Oisín that Fionn asks me; for it were fitter to give me such as he than a man that is older than my father.'

"Say not that,' said the Druid, 'for if Fionn were to hear thee, he himself would not have thee, neither would Oisín dare to take thee.'

"Tell me now,' said Grainné, 'who is that warrior at the right shoulder of Oisín the son of Fionn?'

"Yonder,' said the Druid, 'is Goll Mac Morna, the active, the warlike.'

"Who is that warrior at the shoulder of Goll?' said Grainné.

"Oscar the son of Oisín,' said the Druid.

"Who is that graceful-legged man at the shoulder of Oscar?' said Grainné.

"Caoilté Mac Ronain,' said the Druid.

"What haughty, impetuous warrior is that yonder at the shoulder of Caoilté?' said Grainné.

"The son of Lughaidh of the mighty hand, and that man is sister's son to Fionn Mac Cumhaill," said the Druid.

"Who is that sweet-worded man with the dimple, upon whom is the curling dark-black hair, and [who has] the two ruddy, berry-red cheeks, upon the left hand of Oisín the son of Fionn?"

"That man is Diarmuid, the grandson of Duibhne, the white-toothed, of the lightsome countenance: that is, the best lover of women and of maidens that is in the whole world."

The princess then sent for her own "jewelled, golden-chased goblet," and as was the custom, sent it round with her handmaiden to whomsoever of the guests she chose specially to honour. She did not send it to Dermuid and some others of the younger warriors, but sent it to Finn, to her father, and to the rest. Gradually these sank into a profound slumber, for the cup had been of course drugged. She then made her case known to the young warriors, but from fear of Finn's revenge they refused to assist her. She then went to the extremity of laying *geasa*, or bonds of honour, upon Dermuid, that he should relieve her; and from this, according to the Celtic laws of honour, there was no escape. All the rest advised him to go with her. She left the palace by a wicket-gate, to meet him outside the town. He went over the palisade.

"After that Diarmuid arose and stood, and stretched forth his active warrior hand over his broad weapons, and took leave and farewell of Oisín and of the chiefs of the Fenians; and not bigger is a smooth crimson whortleberry than was each tear that Diarmuid shed from his eyes at parting with his people. Diarmuid went to the top of the fort, and put the shafts of his two javelins under him, and rose with an airy, very light, exceeding high bird-like leap, until he attained the breadth of his two soles of the beautiful grass-green earth on the plain without, and there Grainné met him. Then Diarmuid spoke, and what he said was: 'I trow, O Grainné, that this is an evil course upon which thou art come: for it were better for thee to have Fionn Mac Cumhaill for lover than myself, seeing that I know not what nook, or corner, or remote part of Erin I can take thee to now. Return again to the town, and Fionn will never learn what thou hast done.' 'It is certain that I will not go back,' said Grainné, 'and that I will not part from thee until death part me from thee.' 'Then go forward, O Grainné,' said Diarmuid."

Dermuid, thus carried off *volens volens*, falls in desperate love with the brave woman, and the two set out, pursued by Finn and her father; and their adventures through Ireland, hunted by the two old gentlemen, and assisted by the young officers of the Fenians, forms the plot of this old Celtic romance. The reader must excuse our wandering from history into romance, even though it is concerned with the Celts in the third century.



A FOIN PECKLESS THING, IOTTER O ALONG LIKE —

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The Claverings

CHAPTER I.

JULIA BRABAZON.



THE gardens of Clavering Park were removed some three hundred yards from the large, square, sombre-looking stone mansion which was the country house of Sir Hugh Clavering, the eleventh baronet of that name; and in these gardens, which had but little of beauty to recommend them, I will introduce my readers to two of the personages with whom I wish to make them acquainted in the following story. It was now the end of August, and the parterres, beds, and bits of lawn were dry, disfigured, and almost ugly, from the effects of a long drought. In gardens to which care and labour are given abundantly, flower-beds will be pretty, and grass will

be green, let the weather be what it may; but care and labour were but scantily bestowed on the Clavering Gardens, and everything was yellow, adust, harsh, and dry. Over the burnt turf towards a gate

that led to the house, a lady was walking, and by her side there walked a gentleman.

"You are going in, then, Miss Brabazon," said the gentleman, and it was very manifest from his tone that he intended to convey some deep reproach in his words.

"Of course I am going in," said the lady. "You asked me to walk with you, and I refused. You have now waylaid me, and therefore I shall escape,—unless I am prevented by violence." As she spoke she stood still for a moment, and looked into his face with a smile which seemed to indicate that if such violence were used, within rational bounds, she would not feel herself driven to great anger.

But though she might be inclined to be playful, he was by no means in that mood. "And why did you refuse me when I asked you?" said he.

"For two reasons, partly because I thought it better to avoid any conversation with you."

"That is civil to an old friend."

"But chiefly," and now as she spoke she drew herself up, and dismissed the smile from her face, and allowed her eyes to fall upon the ground; "but chiefly because I thought that Lord Ongar would prefer that I should not roam alone about Clavering Park with any young gentleman while I am down here; and that he might specially object to my roaming with you, were he to know that you and I were old acquaintances. Now I have been very frank, Mr. Clavering, and I think that that ought to be enough."

"You are afraid of him already, then?"

"I am afraid of offending any one whom I love, and especially any one to whom I owe any duty."

"Enough! indeed it is not. From what you know of me do you think it likely that that will be enough?" He was now standing in front of her, between her and the gate, and she made no effort to leave him.

"And what is it you want? I suppose you do not mean to fight Lord Ongar, and that if you did you would not come to me."

"Fight him! No; I have no quarrel with him. Fighting him would do no good."

"None in the least; and he would not fight if you were to ask him; and you could not ask him without being false to me."

"I should have had an example for that, at any rate."

"That's nonsense, Mr. Clavering. My falsehood, if you should choose to call me false, is of a very different nature, and is pardonable by all laws known in the world."

"You are a jilt,—that is all."

"Come, Harry, don't use hard words," and she put her hand kindly upon his arm. "Look at me, such as I am, and at yourself, and then say whether anything but misery could come of a match between you and me. Our ages by the register are the same, but I am ten years older than you by the world. I have two hundred a year, and I owe at this moment

six hundred pounds. You have, perhaps, double as much, and would lose half of that if you married. You are an usher at a school."

"No, madam, I am not an usher at a school."

"Well, well, you know I don't mean to make you angry."

"At the present moment, I am a schoolmaster, and if I remained so, I might fairly look forward to a liberal income. But I am going to give that up."

"You will not be more fit for matrimony because you are going to give up your profession. Now Lord Ongar has—heaven knows what;—perhaps sixty thousand a year."

"In all my life I never heard such effrontery,—such barefaced shameless worldliness."

"Why should I not love a man with a large income?"

"He is old enough to be your father."

"He is thirty-six, and I am twenty-four."

"Thirty-six!"

"There is the Peerage for you to look at. But, my dear Harry, do you not know that you are perplexing me and yourself too, for nothing? I was fool enough when I came here from Nice, after papa's death, to let you talk nonsense to me for a month or two."

"Did you or did you not swear that you loved me?"

"Oh, Mr. Clavering, I did not imagine that your strength would have condescended to take such advantage over the weakness of a woman. I remember no oaths of any kind, and what foolish assertions I may have made, I am not going to repeat. It must have become manifest to you during these two years that all that was a romance. If it be a pleasure to you to look back to it, of that pleasure I cannot deprive you. Perhaps I also may sometimes look back. But I shall never speak of that time again; and you, if you are as noble as I take you to be, will not speak of it either. I know you would not wish to injure me."

"I would wish to save you from the misery you are bringing on yourself."

"In that you must allow me to look after myself. Lord Ongar certainly wants a wife, and I intend to be true to him,—and useful."

"How about love?"

"And to love him, sir. Do you think that no man can win a woman's love, unless he is filled to the brim with poetry, and has a neck like Lord Byron, and is handsome like your worship? You are very handsome, Harry, and you, too, should go into the market and make the best of yourself. Why should you not learn to love some nice girl that has money to assist you?"

"Julia!"

"No, sir; I will not be called Julia. If you do, I will be insulted, and leave you instantly. I may call you Harry, as being so much younger,—though we were born in the same month, and as a sort of cousin. But I shall never do that after to-day."

"You have courage enough, then, to tell me that you have not ill-used me?"

"Certainly I have. Why, what a fool you would have me be! Look at me, and tell me whether I am fit to be the wife of such a one as you. By the time you are entering the world, I shall be an old woman, and shall have lived my life. Even if I were fit to be your mate when we were living here together, am I fit, after what I have done and seen during the last two years? Do you think it would really do any good to any one if I were to jilt, as you call it, Lord Ongar, and tell them all,—your cousin, ~~the~~ Hugh, and my sister, and your father,—that I was going to keep myself up, and marry you when you were ready for me?"

"You mean to say that the evil is done."

"No, indeed. At the present moment I owe six hundred pounds, and I don't know where to turn for it, so that my husband may not be dunned for my debts as soon as he has married me. What a wife I should have been for you;—should I not?"

"I could pay the six hundred pounds for you with money that I have earned myself, though you do call me an usher; and perhaps would ask fewer questions about it than Lord Ongar will do with all his thousands."

"Dear Harry, I beg your pardon about the usher. Of course, I know that you are a fellow of your college, and that St. Cuthbert's, where you teach the boys, is one of the grandest schools in England; and I hope you'll be a bishop; nay,—I think you will, if you make up your mind to try for it."

"I have given up all idea of going into the church."

"Then you'll be a judge. I know you'll be great and distinguished, and that you'll do it all yourself. You are distinguished already. If you could only know how infinitely I should prefer your lot to mine! Oh, Harry, I envy you! I do envy you! You have got the ball at your feet, and the world before you, and can win everything for yourself."

"But nothing is anything without your love."

"Psha! Love, indeed. What could I do for you but ruin you? You know it as well as I do; but you are selfish enough to wish to continue a romance which would be absolutely destructive to me, though for a while it might afford a pleasant relaxation to your graver studies. Harry, you can choose in the world. You have divinity, and law, and literature, and art. And if debarred from love now by the exigencies of labour, you will be as fit for love in ten years' time as you are at present."

"But I do love now."

"Be a man, then, and keep it to yourself. Love is not to be our master. You can choose, as I say; but I have had no choice,—no choice but to be married well, or to go out like a snuff of a candle. I don't like the snuff of a candle, and, therefore, I am going to be married well."

"And that suffices?"

"It must suffice. And why should it not suffice? You are very uncivil, cousin, and very unlike the rest of the world. Everybody com-

pliments me on my marriage. Lord Ongar is not only rich, but he is a man of fashion, and a man of talent."

"Are you fond of race-horses yourself?"

"Very fond of them."

"And of that kind of life?"

"Very fond of it. I mean to be fond of everything that Lord Ongar likes. I know that I can't change him, and, therefore, I shall not try."

"You are right there, Miss Brabazon."

"You mean to be impertinent, sir; but I will not take it so. This is to be our last meeting in private, and I won't acknowledge that I am insulted. But it must be over now, Harry; and here I have been pacing round and round the garden with you, in spite of my refusal just now. It must not be repeated, or things will be said which I do not mean to have ever said of me. Good-by, Harry."

"Good-by, Julia."

"Well, for that once let it pass. And remember this; I have told you all my hopes, and my one trouble. I have been thus open with you because I thought it might serve to make you look at things in a right light. I trust to your honour as a gentleman to repeat nothing that I have said to you."

"I am not given to repeat such things as those."

"I'm sure you are not. And I hope you will not misunderstand the spirit in which they have been spoken. I shall never regret what I have told you now, if it tends to make you perceive that we must both regard our past acquaintance as a romance, which must, from the stern necessity of things, be treated as a dream which we have dreamt, or a poem which we have read."

"You can treat it as you please."

"God bless you, Harry; and I will always hope for your welfare, and hear of your success with joy. Will you come up and shoot with them on Thursday?"

"What, with Hugh? No; Hugh and I do not hit it off together. If I shot at Clavering I should have to do it as a sort of head-keeper. It's a higher position, I know, than that of an usher, but it doesn't suit me."

"Oh, Harry! that is so cruel! But you will come up to the house. Lord Ongar will be there on the thirty-first; the day after to-morrow, you know."

"I must decline even that temptation. I never go into the house when Hugh is there, except about twice a year on solemn invitation—just to prevent there being a family quarrel."

"Good-by, then," and she offered him her hand.

"Good-by, if it must be so."

"I don't know whether you mean to grace my marriage?"

"Certainly not. I shall be away from Clavering, so that the marriage bells may not wound my ears. For the matter of that, I shall be at the school."

"I suppose we shall meet some day in town."

"Most probably not. My ways and Lord Ongar's will be altogether different, even if I should succeed in getting up to London. If you ever come to see Hermione here, I may chance to meet you in the house. But you will not do that often, the place is so dull and unattractive."

"It is the dearest old park."

"You won't care much for old parks as Lady Ongar."

"You don't know what I may care about as Lady Ongar; but as Julia Brabazon I will now say good-by for the last time." Then they parted, and the lady returned to the great house, while Harry Clavering made his way across the park towards the rectory.

Three years before this scene in the gardens at Clavering Park, Lord Brabazon had died at Nice, leaving one unmarried daughter, the lady to whom the reader has just been introduced. One other daughter he had, who was then already married to Sir Hugh Clavering, and Lady Clavering was the Hermione of whom mention has already been made. Lord Brabazon, whose peerage had descended to him in a direct line from the times of the Plantagenets, was one of those unfortunate nobles of whom England is burdened with but few, who have no means equal to their rank. He had married late in life, and had died without a male heir. The title which had come from the Plantagenets was now lapsed; and when the last lord died, about four hundred a year was divided between his two daughters. The elder had already made an excellent match, as regarded fortune, in marrying Sir Hugh Clavering; and the younger was now about to make a much more splendid match in her alliance with Lord Ongar. Of them I do not know that it is necessary to say much more at present.

And of Harry Clavering it perhaps may not be necessary to say much in the way of description. The attentive reader will have already gathered nearly all that should be known of him before he makes himself known by his own deeds. He was the only son of the Reverend Henry Clavering, rector of Clavering, uncle of the present Sir Hugh Clavering, and brother of the last Sir Hugh. The Reverend Henry Clavering, and Mrs. Clavering his wife, and his two daughters, Mary and Fanny Clavering, lived always at Clavering Rectory, on the outskirts of Clavering Park, at a full mile's distance from the house. The church stood in the park, about midway between the two residences. When I have named one more Clavering, Captain Clavering, Captain Archibald Clavering, Sir Hugh's brother, and when I shall have said also that both Sir Hugh and Captain Clavering were men fond of pleasure and fond of money, I shall have said all that I need now say about the Clavering family at large.

Julia Brabazon had indulged in some reminiscence of the romance of her past poetic life when she talked of cousinship between her and Harry Clavering. Her sister was the wife of Harry Clavering's first cousin, but between her and Harry there was no relationship whatever. When old Lord Brabazon had died at Nice she had come to Clavering Park, and had

created some astonishment among those who knew Sir Hugh by making good her footing in his establishment. He was not the man to take up a wife's sister, and make his house her home, out of charity or from domestic love. Lady Clavering, who had been a handsome woman and fashionable withal, no doubt may have had some influence; but Sir Hugh was a man much prone to follow his own courses. It must be presumed that Julia Brabazon had made herself agreeable in the house, and probably also useful. She had been taken to London through two seasons, and had there held up her head among the bravest. And she had been taken abroad,—for Sir Hugh did not love Clavering Park, except during six weeks of partridge shooting; and she had been at Newmarket with them, and at the house of a certain fast hunting duke with whom Sir Hugh was intimate; and at Brighton with her sister, when it suited Sir Hugh to remain alone at the duke's; and then again up in London, where she finally arranged matters with Lord Ongar. It was acknowledged by all the friends of the two families, and indeed I may say of the three families now—among the Brabazon people, and the Clavering people, and the Courton people,—Lord Ongar's family name was Courton,—that Julia Brabazon had been very clever. Of her and Harry Clavering together no one had ever said a word. If any words had been spoken between her and Hermione on the subject, the two sisters had been discreet enough to manage that they should go no further. In those short months of Julia's romance Sir Hugh had been away from Clavering, and Hermione had been much occupied in giving birth to an heir. Julia had now lived past her one short spell of poetry, had written her one sonnet, and was prepared for the business of the world.

CHAPTER II.

HARRY CLAVERING CHOOSES HIS PROFESSION.

HARRY CLAVERING might not be an usher, but, nevertheless, he was home for the holidays. And who can say where the usher ends and the schoolmaster begins? He, perhaps, may properly be called an usher, who is hired by a private schoolmaster to assist himself in his private occupation, whereas Harry Clavering had been selected by a public body out of a hundred candidates, with much real or pretended reference to certificates of qualification. He was certainly not an usher, as he was paid three hundred a year for his work,—which is quite beyond the mark of ushers. So much was certain; but yet the word stuck in his throat and made him uncomfortable. He did not like to reflect that he was home for the holidays.

But he had determined that he would never come home for the holidays again. At Christmas he would leave the school at which he had won his appointment with so much trouble, and go into an open profession. Indeed he had chosen his profession, and his mode of entering it. He would become a civil engineer, and perhaps a land surveyor, and with

this view he would enter himself as a pupil in the great house of Beilby and Burton. The terms even had been settled. He was to pay a premium of five hundred pounds and join Mr. Burton, who was settled in the town of Stratton, for twelve months before he placed himself in Mr. Beilby's office in London. Stratton was less than twenty miles from Clavering. It was a comfort to him to think that he could pay this five hundred pounds out of his own earnings, without troubling his father. It was a comfort, even though he had earned that money by "ushering" for the last two years.

When he left Julia Brabazon in the garden, Harry Clavering did not go at once home to the rectory, but sauntered out all alone into the park, intending to indulge in reminiscences of his past romance. It was all over, that idea of having Julia Brabazon for his love; and now he had to ask himself whether he intended to be made permanently miserable by her worldly falseness, or whether he would borrow something of her worldly wisdom, and agree with himself to look back on what was past as a pleasurable excitement in his boyhood. Of course we all know that really permanent misery was in truth out of the question. Nature had not made him physically or mentally so poor a creature as to be incapable of a cure. But on this occasion he decided on permanent misery. There was about his heart,—about his actual anatomical heart, with its internal arrangement of valves and blood-vessels,—a heavy dragging feel that almost amounted to corporeal pain, and which he described to himself as agony. Why should this rich, debauched, disreputable lord have the power of taking the cup from his lip, the one morsel of bread which he coveted from his mouth, his one ingot of treasure out of his coffer? Fight him! No, he knew he could not fight Lord Ongar. The world was against such an arrangement. And in truth Harry Clavering had so much contempt for Lord Ongar, that he had no wish to fight so poor a creature. The man had had delirium tremens, and was a worn-out miserable object. So at least Harry Clavering was only too ready to believe. He did not care much for Lord Ongar in the matter. His anger was against her;—that she should have deserted him for a miserable creature, who had nothing to back him but wealth and rank!

There was wretchedness in every view of the matter. He loved her so well, and yet he could do nothing! He could take no step towards saving her or assisting himself. The marriage bells would ring within a month from the present time, and his own father would go to the church and marry them. Unless Lord Ongar were to die before then by God's hand, there could be no escape,—and of such escape Harry Clavering had no thought. He felt a weary, dragging soreness at his heart, and told himself that he must be miserable for ever,—not so miserable but what he would work, but so wretched that the world could have for him no satisfaction.

What could he do? What thing could he achieve so that she should know that he did not let her go from him without more thought, than his poor words had expressed? He was perfectly aware that in their con-

versation she had had the best of the argument,—that he had talked almost like a boy, while she had talked quite like a woman. She had treated him *de haut en bas* with all that superiority which youth and beauty give to a young woman over a very young man. What could he do? Before he returned to the rectory, he had made up his mind what he would do, and on the following morning Julia Brabazon received by the hands of her maid the following note :—

“ I think I understood all that you said to me yesterday. At any rate, I understand that you have one trouble left, and that I have the means of curing it.” In the first draft of his letter he said something about ushering, but that he omitted afterwards. “ You may be assured that the enclosed is all my own, and that it is entirely at my own disposal. You may also be quite sure of good faith on the part of the lender.—H. C.” And in this letter he enclosed a cheque for six hundred pounds. It was the money which he had saved since he took his degree, and had been intended for Messrs. Beilby and Burton. But he would wait another two years,—continuing to do his ushering for her sake. What did it matter to a man who must, under any circumstances, be permanently miserable?

Sir Hugh was not yet at Clavering. He was to come with Lord Ongar on the eve of the partridge-shooting. The two sisters, therefore, had the house all to themselves. At about twelve they sat down to breakfast together in a little upstairs chamber adjoining Lady Clavering's own room, Julia Brabazon at that time having her lover's generous letter in her pocket. She knew that it was as improper as it was generous, and that, moreover, it was very dangerous. There was no knowing what might be the result of such a letter should Lord Ongar even know that she had received it. She was not absolutely angry with Harry, but had, to herself, twenty times called him a foolish, indiscreet, dear generous boy. But what was she to do with the cheque? As to that, she had hardly as yet made up her mind when she joined her sister on the morning in question. Even to Hermione she did not dare to tell the fact that such a letter had been received by her.

But in truth her debts were a great torment to her; and yet how trifling they were when compared with the wealth of the man who was to become her husband in six weeks! Let her marry him, and not pay them, and he probably would never be the wiser. They would get themselves paid almost without his knowledge, perhaps altogether without his hearing of them. But yet she feared him, knowing him to be greedy about money; and, to give her such merit as was due to her, she felt the meanness of going to her husband with debts on her shoulder. She had five thousand pounds of her own; but the very settlement which gave her a noble dower, and which made the marriage so brilliant, made over this small sum in its entirety to her lord. She had been wrong not to tell the lawyer of her trouble when he had brought the paper for her to sign; but she had not told him. If Sir Hugh Clavering had been her own brother there would have been no difficulty, but he was only her brother-in-law, and she feared to speak to him. Her sister, however,

knew that there were debts, and on that subject she was not afraid to speak to Hermione.

"Hermie," said she, "what am I to do about this money that I owe? I got a bill from Colclugh's this morning."

"Just because he knows you're going to be married; that's all."

"But how am I to pay him?"

"Take no notice of it till next spring. I don't know what else you can do. You'll be sure to have money when you come back from the Continent."

"You couldn't lend it me; could you?"

"Who? I? Did you ever know me have any money in hand since I was married? I have the name of an allowance, but it is always spent before it comes to me, and I am always in debt."

"Would Hugh—let me have it?"

"What, give it you?"

"Well, it wouldn't be so very much for him. I never asked him for a pound yet."

"I think he would say something you wouldn't like if you were to ask him; but, of course, you can try it if you please."

"Then what am I to do?"

"Lord Ongar should have let you keep your own fortune. It would have been nothing to him."

"Hugh didn't let you keep your own fortune."

"But the money which will be nothing to Lord Ongar was a good deal to Hugh. You're going to have sixty thousand a year, while we have to do with seven or eight. Besides, I hadn't been out in London, and it wasn't likely I should owe much in Nice. He did ask me, and there was something."

"What am I to do, Hermie?"

"Write and ask Lord Ongar to let you have what you want out of your own money. Write to-day, so that he may get your letter before he comes."

"Oh, dear! oh, dear! I never wrote a word to him yet, and to begin with asking him for money!"

"I don't think he can be angry with you for that."

"I shouldn't know what to say. Would you write it for me, and let me see how it looks?"

This Lady Clavering did; and had she refused to do it, I think that poor Harry Clavering's cheque would have been used. As it was, Lady Clavering wrote the letter to "My dear Lord Ongar," and it was copied and signed by "Yours most affectionately, Julia Brabazon." The effect of this was the receipt of a cheque for a thousand pounds in a very pretty note from Lord Ongar, which the lord brought with him to Clavering, and sent up to Julia as he was dressing for dinner. It was an extremely comfortable arrangement, and Julia was very glad of the money,—feeling it to be a portion of that which was her own. And Harry's cheque had

been returned to him on the day of its receipt. "Of course I cannot take it, and of course you should not have sent it." These words were written on the morsel of paper in which the money was returned. But Miss Brabazon had torn the signature off the cheque, so that it might be safe, whereas Harry Clavering had taken no precaution with it whatever. But then Harry Clavering had not lived two years in London.

During the hours that the cheque was away from him, Harry had told his father that perhaps, even yet, he might change his purpose as to going to Messrs. Beilby and Burton. He did not know, he said, but he was still in doubt. This had sprung from some chance question which his father had asked, and which had seemed to demand an answer. Mr. Clavering greatly disliked the scheme of life which his son had made. Harry's life hitherto had been prosperous and very creditable. He had gone early to Cambridge, and at twenty-two had become a fellow of his college. This fellowship he could hold for five or six years without going into orders. It would then lead to a living, and would in the meantime afford a livelihood. But, beyond this, Harry, with an energy which he certainly had not inherited from his father, had become a schoolmaster, and was already a rich man. He had done more than well, and there was a great probability that between them they might be able to buy the next presentation to Clavering, when the time should come in which Sir Hugh should determine on selling it. That Sir Hugh should give the family living to his cousin was never thought probable by any of the family at the rectory; but he might perhaps part with it under such circumstances on favourable terms. For all these reasons the father was very anxious that his son should follow out the course for which he had been intended; but that he, being unenergetic and having hitherto done little for his son, should dictate to a young man who had been energetic, and who had done much for himself, was out of the question. Harry, therefore, was to be the arbiter of his own fate. But when Harry received back the cheque from Julia Brabazon, then he again returned to his resolution respecting Messrs. Beilby and Burton, and took the first opportunity of telling his father that such was the case.

After breakfast he followed his father into his study, and there, sitting in two easy-chairs opposite to each other, they lit each a cigar. Such was the reverend gentleman's custom in the afternoon, and such also in the morning. I do not know whether the smoking of four or five cigars daily by the parson of a parish may now-a-day be considered as a vice in him, but if so, it was the only vice with which Mr. Clavering could be charged. He was a kind, soft-hearted, gracious man, tender to his wife, whom he ever regarded as the angel of his house, indulgent to his daughters, whom he idolized, ever patient with his parishioners, and awake,—though not widely awake,—to the responsibilities of his calling. The world had been too comfortable for him, and also too narrow; so that he had sunk into idleness. The world had given him much to eat and drink, but it had given him little to do, and thus he had gradually fallen

away from his early purposes, till his energy hardly sufficed for the doing of that little. His living gave him eight hundred a year; his wife's fortune nearly doubled that. He had married early, and had got his living early, and had been very prosperous. But he was not a happy man. He knew that he had put off the day of action till the power of action had passed away from him. His library was well furnished, but he rarely read much else than novels and poetry; and of late years the reading even of poetry had given way to the reading of novels. Till within ten years of the hour of which I speak, he had been a hunting parson,—not hunting loudly, but following his sport as it is followed by moderate sportsmen. Then there had come a new bishop, and the new bishop had sent for him,—nay, finally had come to him, and had lectured him with blatant authority. "My lord," said the parson of Clavering, plucking up something of his past energy, as the colour rose to his face, "I think you are wrong in this. I think you are specially wrong to interfere with me in this way on your first coming among us. You feel it to be your duty, no doubt; but to me it seems that you mistake your duty. But, as the matter is one simply of my own pleasure, I shall give it up." After that Mr. Clavering hunted no more, and never spoke a good word to any one of the bishop of his diocese. For myself, I think it as well that clergymen should not hunt; but had I been the parson of Clavering, I should, under those circumstances, have hunted double.

Mr. Clavering hunted no more, and probably smoked a greater number of cigars in consequence. He had an increased amount of time at his disposal, but did not, therefore, give more time to his duties. Alas! what time did he give to his duties? He kept a most energetic curate, whom he allowed to do almost what he would with the parish. Every-day services he did prohibit, declaring that he would not have the parish church made ridiculous; but in other respects his curate was the pastor. Once every Sunday he read the service, and once every Sunday he preached, and he resided in his parsonage ten months every year. His wife and daughters went among the poor,—and he smoked cigars in his library. Though not yet fifty, he was becoming fat and idle,—unwilling to walk, and not caring much even for such riding as the bishop had left to him. And, to make matters worse,—far worse, he knew all this of himself, and understood it thoroughly. "I see a better path, and know how good it is, but I follow ever the worse." He was saying that to himself daily, and was saying it always without hope.

And his wife had given him up. She had given him up, not with disdainful rejection, nor with contempt in her eye, or censure in her voice, not with diminution of love or of outward respect. She had given him up as a man abandons his attempts to make his favourite dog take the water. He would fain that the dog he loves should dash into the stream as other dogs will do. It is, to his thinking, a noble instinct in a dog. But his dog dreads the water. As, however, he has learned to love the beast, he puts up with this mischance, and never dreams of banishing

poor Ponto from his hearth because of this failure. And so it was with Mrs. Clavering and her husband at the rectory. He understood it all. He knew that he was so far rejected; and he acknowledged to himself the necessity for such rejection.

"It is a very serious thing to decide upon," he said, when his son had spoken to him.

"Yes; it is serious,—about as serious a thing as a man can think of; but a man cannot put it off on that account. If I mean to make such a change in my plans, the sooner I do it the better."

"But yesterday you were in another mind."

"No, father, not in another mind. I did not tell you then, nor can I tell you all now. I had thought that I should want my money for another purpose for a year or two; but that I have abandoned."

"Is the purpose a secret, Harry?"

"It is a secret, because it concerns another person."

"You were going to lend your money to some one?"

"I must keep it a secret, though you know I seldom have any secrets from you. That idea, however, is abandoned, and I mean to go over to Stratton to-morrow, and tell Mr. Burton that I shall be there after Christmas. I must be at St. Cuthbert's on Tuesday."

Then they both sat silent for a while, silently blowing out their clouds of smoke. The son had said all that he cared to say, and would have wished that there might then be an end of it; but he knew that his father had much on his mind, and would fain express, if he could express it without too much trouble, or without too evident a need of self-reproach, his own thoughts on the subject. "You have made up your mind, then, altogether that you do not like the church as a profession," he said at last.

"I think I have, father."

"And on what grounds? The grounds which recommend it to you are very strong. Your education has adapted you for it. Your success in it is already ensured by your fellowship. In a great degree you have entered it as a profession already, by taking a fellowship. What you are doing is not choosing a line in life, but changing one already chosen. You are making of yourself a rolling stone."

"A stone should roll till it has come to the spot that suits it."

"Why not give up the school if it irks you?"

"And become a Cambridge Don, and practise deportment among the undergraduates."

"I don't see that you need do that. You need not even live at Cambridge. Take a church in London. You would be sure to get one by holding up your hand. If that, with your fellowship, is not sufficient, I will give you what more you want."

"No, father—no. By God's blessing I will never ask you for a pound. I can hold my fellowship for four years longer without orders, and in four years' time I think I can earn my bread."

"I don't doubt that, Harry."

"Then why should I not follow my wishes in this matter? The truth is, I do not feel myself qualified to be a good clergyman."

"It is not that you have doubts, is it?"

"I might have them if I came to think much about it, ~~as~~ as I must do if I took orders. And I do not wish to be crippled in doing what I think lawful by conventional rules. A rebellious clergyman is, I think, a sorry object. It seems to me that he is a bird fouling his own nest. Now, I know I should be a rebellious clergyman."

"In our church the life of a clergyman is as the life of any other gentleman,—within very broad limits."

"Then why did Bishop Proudie interfere with your hunting?"

"Limits may be very broad, Harry, and yet exclude hunting. Bishop Proudie was vulgar and intrusive, such being the nature of his wife, who instructs him; but if you were in orders I should be very sorry to see you take to hunting."

"It seems to me that a clergyman has nothing to do in life unless he is always preaching and teaching. Look at Saul,"—Mr. Saul was the curate of Clavering—"he is always preaching and teaching. He is doing the best he can; and what a life of it he has. He has literally thrown off all worldly cares,—and consequently everybody laughs at him, and nobody loves him. I don't believe a better man breathes, but I shouldn't like his life."

At this point there was another pause, which lasted till the cigars had come to an end. Then, as he threw the stump into the fire, Mr. Clavering spoke again. "The truth is, Harry, that you have had, all your life, a bad example before you."

"No, father."

"Yes, my son;—let me speak on to the end, and then you can say what you please. In me you have had a bad example on one side, and now, in poor Saul, you have a bad example on the other side. Can you fancy no life between the two, which would fit your physical nature which is larger than his, and your mental wants which are higher than mine? Yes, they are, Harry. It is my duty to say this, but it would be unseemly that there should be any controversy between us on the subject."

"If you choose to stop me in that way——"

"I do choose to stop you in that way. As for Saul, it is impossible that you should become such a man as he. It is not that he mortifies his flesh, but that he has no flesh to mortify. He is unconscious of the flavour of venison, or the scent of roses, or the beauty of women. He is an exceptional specimen of a man, and you need no more fear, than you should venture to hope, that you could become such as he is."

At this point they were interrupted by the entrance of Fanny Clavering, who came to say that Mr. Saul was in the drawing-room. "What does he want, Fanny?" This question Mr. Clavering asked half in a whisper, but with something of comic humour in his face, as though partly afraid that Mr. Saul should hear it, and partly intending to convey a wish that he might escape Mr. Saul, if it were possible.

"It's about the iron church, papa. He says it is come,—or part of it has come,—and he wants you to go out to Cumberly Green about the site."

"I thought that was all settled."

"He says not."

"What does it matter where it is? He can put it anywhere he likes on the Green. However, I had better go to him." So Mr. Clavering went. Cumberly Green was a hamlet in the parish of Clavering, three miles distant from the church, the people of which had got into a wicked habit of going to a dissenting chapel near to them. By Mr. Saul's energy, but chiefly out of Mr. Clavering's purse, an iron chapel had been purchased for a hundred and fifty pounds, and Mr. Saul proposed to add to his own duties the pleasing occupation of walking to Cumberly Green every Sunday morning before breakfast, and every Wednesday evening after dinner, to perform a service and bring back to the true flock as many of the erring sheep of Cumberly Green as he might be able to catch. Towards the purchase of this iron church Mr. Clavering had at first given a hundred pounds. Sir Hugh, in answer to the fifth application, had very ungraciously, through his steward, bestowed ten pounds. Among the farmers one pound nine and eightpence had been collected. Mr. Saul had given two pounds; Mrs. Clavering gave five pounds; the girls gave ten shillings each; Henry Clavering gave five pounds;—and then the parson made up the remainder. But Mr. Saul had journeyed thrice painfully to Bristol, making the bargain for the church, going and coming each time by third-class, and he had written all the letters; but Mrs. Clavering had paid the postage, and she and the girls between them were making the covering for the little altar.

"Is it all settled, Harry?" said Fanny, stopping with her brother, and hanging over his chair. She was a pretty, gay-spirited girl, with bright eyes and dark brown hair, which fell in two curls behind her ears.

"He has said nothing to unsettle it."

"I know it makes him very unhappy."

"No, Fanny, not very unhappy. He would rather that I should go into the church, but that is about all."

"I think you are quite right."

"And Mary thinks I am quite wrong."

"Mary thinks so, of course. So should I too, perhaps, if I were engaged to a clergyman. That's the old story of the fox who had lost his tail."

"And your tail isn't gone yet?"

"No, my tail isn't gone yet. Mary thinks that no life is like a clergyman's life. But, Harry, though mamma hasn't said so, I'm sure she thinks you are right. She won't say so as long as it may seem to interfere with anything papa may choose to say; but I'm sure she's glad in her heart."

"And I am glad in my heart, Fanny. And as I'm the person most

concerned, I suppose that's the most material thing." Then they followed their father into the drawing-room.

"Couldn't you drive Mrs. Clavering over in the pony chair, and settle it between you," said Mr. Clavering to his curate. Mr. Saul looked disappointed. In the first place, he hated driving the pony, which was a rapid-footed little beast, that had a will of his own; and in the next place, he thought the rector ought to visit the spot on such an occasion. "Or Mrs. Clavering will drive you," said the rector, remembering Mr. Saul's objection to the pony. Still Mr. Saul looked unhappy. Mr. Saul was very tall and very thin, with a tall thin head, and weak eyes, and a sharp, well-cut nose, and, so to say, no lips, and very white teeth, with no beard, and a well-cut chin. His face was so thin that his cheekbones obtruded themselves unpleasantly. He wore a long rusty black coat, and a high rusty black waistcoat, and trousers that were brown with dirty roads and general ill-usage. Nevertheless, it never occurred to any one that Mr. Saul did not look like a gentleman, not even to himself, to whom no ideas whatever on that subject ever presented themselves. But that he was a gentleman I think he knew well enough, and was able to carry himself before Sir Hugh and his wife with quite as much ease as he could do in the rectory. Once or twice he had dined at the great house; but Lady Clavering had declared him to be a bore, and Sir Hugh had called him "that most offensive of all animals, a clerical prig." It had therefore been decided that he was not to be asked to the great house any more. It may be as well to state here, as elsewhere, that Mr. Clavering very rarely went to his nephew's table. On certain occasions he did do so, so that there might be no recognized quarrel between him and Sir Hugh; but such visits were few and far between.

After a few more words from Mr. Saul, and a glance from his wife's eye, Mr. Clavering consented to go to Cumberly Green, though there was nothing he liked so little as a morning spent with his curate. When he had started, Harry told his mother also of his final decision. I shall go to Stratton to-morrow and settle it all."

"And what does papa say?" asked the mother.

"Just what he has said before. It is not so much that he wishes me to be a clergyman, as that he does not wish me to have lost all my time up to this."

"It is more than that, I think, Harry," said his elder sister, a tall girl, less pretty than her sister, apparently less careful of her prettiness, very quiet, or, as some said, demure, but known to be good as gold by all who knew her well.

"I doubt it," said Harry, stoutly. "But, however that may be, a man must choose for himself."

"We all thought you had chosen," said Mary.

"If it is settled," said the mother, "I suppose we shall do no good by opposing it."

"Would you wish to oppose it, mamma?" said Harry.

"No, my dear. I think you should judge for yourself."

"You see I could have no scope in the church for that sort of ambition which would satisfy me. Look at such men as Locke, and Stephenson, and Brassey. They are the men who seem to me to do most in the world. They were all self-educated, but surely a man can't have a worse chance because he has learned something. Look at old Beilby with a seat in Parliament, and a property worth two or three hundred thousand pounds! When he was my age he had nothing but his weekly wages."

"I don't know whether Mr. Beilby is a very happy man or a very good man," said Mary.

"I don't know, either," said Harry; "but I do know that he has thrown a single arch over a wider span of water than ever was done before, and that ought to make him happy." After saying this in a tone of high authority, befitting his dignity as a fellow of his college, Harry Clavering went out, leaving his mother and sisters to discuss the subject which to two of them was all-important. As to Mary, she had hopes of her own, vested in the clerical concerns of a neighbouring parish.

CHAPTER III.

LORD ONGAR.

ON the next morning Harry Clavering rode over to Stratton, thinking much of his misery as he went. It was all very well for him, in the presence of his own family to talk of his profession as the one subject which was to him of any importance; but he knew very well himself that he was only beguiling them in doing so. This question of a profession was, after all, but dead leaves to him,—to him who had a canker at his heart, a perpetual thorn in his bosom, a misery within him which no profession could mitigate! Those dear ones at home guessed nothing of this, and he would take care that they should guess nothing. Why should they have the pain of knowing that he had been made wretched for ever by blighted hopes? His mother, indeed, had suspected something in those sweet days of his roaming with Julia through the park. She had once or twice said a word to warn him. But of the very truth of his deep love,—so he told himself,—she had been happily ignorant. Let her be ignorant. Why should he make his mother unhappy? As these thoughts passed through his mind, I think that he revelled in his wretchedness, and made much to himself of his misery. He sucked in his sorrow greedily, and was somewhat proud to have had occasion to break his heart. But not the less, because he was thus early blighted, would he struggle for success in the world. He would show her that, as his wife, she might have had a worthier position than Lord Ongar could give her. He, too, might probably rise the quicker in the world, as now he would have no impediment of wife or family. Then, as he rode along, he composed a sonnet,

fitting to his case, the strength and rhythm of which seemed to him, as he sat on horseback, to be almost perfect. Unfortunately, when he was back at Clavering, and sat in his room with the pen in his hand, the turn of the words had escaped him.

He found Mr. Burton at home, and was not long in concluding his business. Messrs. Beilby and Burton were not only civil engineers, but were land surveyors also, and land valuers on a great scale. They were employed much by Government upon public buildings, and if not architects themselves, were supposed to know all that architects should do and should not do. In the purchase of great properties Mr. Burton's opinion was supposed to be, or to have been, as good as any in the kingdom, and therefore there was very much to be learned in the office at Stratton. But Mr. Burton was not a rich man like his partner, Mr. Beilby, nor an ambitious man. He had never soared Parliamentwards, had never speculated, had never invented, and never been great. He had been the father of a very large family, all of whom were doing as well in the world, and some of them perhaps better, than their father. Indeed, there were many who said that Mr. Burton would have been a richer man if he had not joined himself in partnership with Mr. Beilby. Mr. Beilby had the reputation of swallowing more than his share wherever he went.

When the business part of the arrangement was finished Mr. Burton talked to his future pupil about lodgings, and went out with him into the town to look for rooms. The old man found that Harry Clavering was rather nice in this respect, and in his own mind formed an idea that this new beginner might have been a more auspicious pupil, had he not already become a fellow of a college. Indeed, Harry talked to him quite as though they two were on an equality together; and, before they had parted, Mr. Burton was not sure that Harry did not patronize him. He asked the young man, however, to join them at their early dinner, and then introduced him to Mrs. Burton, and to their youngest daughter, the only child who was still living with them. "All my other girls are married, Mr. Clavering; and all of them married to men connected with my own profession." The colour came slightly to Florence Burton's cheeks as she heard her father's words, and Harry asked himself whether the old man expected that he should go through the same ordeal; but Mr. Burton himself was quite unaware that he had said anything wrong, and then went on to speak of the successes of his sons. "But they began early, Mr. Clavering; and worked hard,—very hard indeed." He was a good, kindly, garrulous old man; but Harry began to doubt whether he would learn much at Stratton. It was, however, too late to think of that now, and everything was fixed.

Harry, when he looked at Florence Burton, at once declared to himself that she was plain. Anything more unlike Julia Brabazon never appeared in the guise of a young lady. Julia was tall, with a high brow, a glorious complexion, a nose as finely modelled as though a Grecian sculptor had cut it, a small mouth, but lovely in its curves, and a chin that finished

and made perfect the symmetry of her face. Her neck was long, but graceful as a swan's, her bust was full, and her whole figure like that of a goddess. Added to this, when he had first known her, had been all the charm of youth. When she had returned to Clavering the other day, the affianced bride of Lord Ongar, he had hardly known whether to admire or to deplore the settled air of established womanhood which she had assumed. Her large eyes had always lacked something of rapid glancing sparkling brightness. They had been glorious eyes to him, and in those early days he had not known that they lacked aught; but he had perceived, or perhaps fancied, that now, in her present condition they were often cold, and sometimes almost cruel. Nevertheless he was ready to swear that she was perfect in her beauty.

Poor Florence Burton was short of stature, was brown, meagre, and poor-looking. So said Harry Clavering to himself. Her small hand, though soft, lacked that wondrous charm of touch which Julia's possessed. Her face was short, and her forehead, though it was broad and open, had none of that feminine command which Julia's look conveyed. That Florence's eyes were very bright,—bright and soft as well, he allowed; and her dark brown hair was very glossy; but she was, on the whole, a mean-looking little thing. He could not, as he said to himself on his return home, avoid the comparison, as she was the first girl he had seen since he had parted from Julia Brabazon.

"I hope you'll find yourself comfortable at Stratton, sir," said old Mrs. Burton.

"Thank you," said Harry, "but I want very little myself in that way. Anything does for me."

"One young gentleman we had took a bedroom at Mrs. Pott's, and did very nicely without any second room at all. 'Don't you remember, Mr. B.; it was young Granger.'"

"Young Granger had a very short allowance," said Mr. Burton. "He lived upon fifty pounds a year all the time he was here."

"And I don't think Scarness had more when he began," said Mrs. Burton. "Mr. Scarness married one of my girls, Mr. Clavering, when he started himself at Liverpool. He has pretty nigh all the Liverpool docks under him now. I have heard him say that butcher's meat did not cost him four shillings a week all the time he was here. I've always thought Stratton one of the reasonablest places anywhere for a young man to do for himself in."

"I don't know, my dear," said the husband, "that Mr. Clavering will care very much for that."

"Perhaps not, Mr. B.; but I do like to see young men careful about their spendings. What's the use of spending a shilling when sixpence will do as well; and sixpence saved when a man has nothing but himself, becomes pounds and pounds by the time he has a family about him."

During all this time Miss Burton said little or nothing, and Harry

Clavering himself did not say much. He could not express any intention of rivalling Mr. Scarness's economy in the article of butcher's meat, nor could he promise to content himself with Granger's solitary bedroom. But as he rode home he almost began to fear that he had made a mistake. He was not wedded to the joys of his college hall, or the college common room. He did not like the narrowness of college life. But he doubted whether the change from that to the oft-repeated hospitalities of Mrs. Burton might not be too much for him. Scarness's four shillings'-worth of butcher's meat had already made him half sick of his new profession, and though Stratton might be the "reasonablest place anywhere for a young man," he could not look forward to living there for a year with much delight. As for Miss Burton, it might be quite as well that she was plain, as he wished for none of the delights which beauty affords to young men.

On his return home, however, he made no complaint of Stratton. He was too strong-willed to own that he had been in any way wrong, and when early in the following week he started for St. Cuthbert's, he was able to speak with cheerful hope of his new prospects. If ultimately he should find life in Stratton to be unendurable, he would cut that part of his career short, and contrive to get up to London at an earlier time than he had intended.

On the 31st of August Lord Ongar and Sir Hugh Clavering reached Clavering Park, and, as has been already told, a pretty little note was at once sent up to Miss Brabazon in her bedroom. When she met Lord Ongar in the drawing-room, about an hour afterwards, she had instructed herself that it would be best to say nothing of the note; but she could not refrain from a word. "I am much obliged, my lord, by your kindness and generosity," she said, as she gave him her hand. He merely bowed and smiled, and muttered something as to his hoping that he might always find it as easy to gratify her. He was a little man, on whose behalf it certainly appeared that the Peerage must have told a falsehood; it seemed so at least to those who judged of his years from his appearance. The Peerage said that he was thirty-six, and that, no doubt, was in truth his age, but any one would have declared him to be ten years older. This look was produced chiefly by the effect of an elaborately dressed jet black wig which he wore. What misfortune had made him bald so early, —if to be bald early in life be a misfortune,—I cannot say; but he had lost the hair from the crown of his head, and had preferred wiggery to baldness. No doubt an effort was made to hide the wiggishness of his wigs, but what effect in that direction was ever made successfully? He was, moreover, weak, thin, and physically poor, and had, no doubt, increased this weakness and poorness by hard living. Though others thought him old, time had gone swiftly with him, and he still thought himself a young man. He hunted, though he could not ride. He shot, though he could not walk. And, unfortunately, he drank, though he had no capacity for drinking! His friends at last had taught him to

believe that his only chance of saving himself lay in marriage, and therefore he had engaged himself to Julia Brabazon, purchasing her at the price of a brilliant settlement. If Lord Ongar should die before her, Ongar Park was to be hers for life, with thousands a year to maintain it. Courton Castle, the great family seat, would of course go to the heir; but Ongar Park was supposed to be the most delightful small country-seat anywhere within thirty miles of London. It lay among the Surrey hills, and all the world had heard of the charms of Ongar Park. If Julia were to survive her lord, Ongar Park was to be hers; and they who saw them both together had but little doubt that she would come to the enjoyment of this clause in her settlement. Lady Clavering had been clever in arranging the match; and Sir Hugh, though he might have been unwilling to give his sister-in-law money out of his own pocket, had performed his duty as a brother-in-law in looking to her future welfare. Julia Brabazon had no doubt that she was doing well. Poor Harry Clavering! She had loved him in the days of her romance. She, too, had written her sonnets. But she had grown old earlier in life than he had done, and had taught herself that romance could not be allowed to a woman in her position. She was highly born, the daughter of a peer, without money, and even without a home to which she had any claim. Of course she had accepted Lord Ongar, but she had not put out her hand to take all these good things without resolving that she would do her duty to her future lord. The duty would be doubtless disagreeable, but she would do it with all the more diligence on that account.

September passed by, hecatombs of partridges were slaughtered, and the day of the wedding drew nigh. It was pretty to see Lord Ongar and the self-satisfaction which he enjoyed at this time. The world was becoming young with him again, and he thought that he rather liked the respectability of his present mode of life. He gave himself but scanty allowances of wine, and no allowance of anything stronger than wine, and did not dislike his temperance. There was about him at all hours an air which seemed to say, "There; I told you all that I could do it as soon as there was any necessity." And in these halcyon days he could shoot for an hour without his pony, and he liked the gentle courteous badinage which was bestowed upon his courtship, and he liked also Julia's beauty. Her conduct to him was perfect. She was never pert, never exigent, never romantic, and never humble. She never bored him, and yet was always ready to be with him when he wished it. She was never exalted; and yet she bore her high place as became a woman nobly born and acknowledged to be beautiful.

"I declare you have quite made a lover of him," said Lady Clavering to her sister. When a thought of the match had first arisen in Sir Hugh's London house, Lady Clavering had been eager in praise of Lord Ongar, or eager in praise rather of the position which the future Lady Ongar might hold; but since the prize had been secured, since it had become plain that Julia was to be the greater woman of the two, she had harped

sometimes on the other string. As a sister she had striven for a sister's welfare, but as a woman she could not keep herself from comparisons which might tend to show that after all, well as Julia was doing, she was not doing better than her elder sister had done. Hermione had married simply a baronet, and not the richest or the most amiable among baronets; but she had married a man suitable in age and wealth, with whom any girl might have been in love. She had not sold herself to be the nurse, or not to be the nurse, as it might turn out, of a worn-out debauché. She would have hinted nothing of this, perhaps have thought nothing of this, had not Julia and Lord Ongar walked together through the Clavering groves as though they were two young people. She owed it as a duty to her sister to point out that Lord Ongar could not be a romantic young person, and ought not to be encouraged to play that part.

"I don't know that I have made anything of him," answered Julia. "I suppose he's much like other men when they're going to be married." Julia quite understood the ideas that were passing through her sister's mind, and did not feel them to be unnatural.

"What I mean is, that he has come out so strong in the Romeo line, which we hardly expected, you know. We shall have him under your bedroom window with a guitar like Don Giovanni."

"I hope not, because it's so cold. I don't think it likely, as he seems fond of going to bed early."

"And it's the best thing for him," said Lady Clavering, becoming serious and carefully benevolent. "It's quite a wonder what good hours and quiet living have done for him in so short a time. I was observing him as he walked yesterday, and he put his feet to the ground as firmly almost as Hugh does."

"Did he indeed? I hope he won't have the habit of putting his hand down firmly as Hugh does sometimes."

"As for that," said Lady Clavering, with a little tremor, "I don't think there's much difference between them. They all say that when Lord Ongar means a thing he does mean it."

"I think a man ought to have a way of his own."

"And a woman also, don't you, my dear? But, as I was saying, if Lord Ongar will continue to take care of himself he may become quite a different man. Hugh says that he drinks next to nothing now, and though he sometimes lights a cigar in the smoking-room at night, he hardly ever smokes it. You must do what you can to keep him from tobacco. I happen to know that Sir Charles Poddy said that so many cigars were worse for him even than brandy."

All this Julia bore with an even temper. She was determined to bear everything till her time should come. Indeed she had made herself understand that the hearing of such things as these was a part of the price which she was to be called upon to pay. It was not pleasant for her to hear what Sir Charles Poddy had said about the tobacco and brandy of the man she was just going to marry. She would sooner have

heard of his riding sixty miles a day, or dancing all night, as she might have heard had she been contented to take Harry Clavering. But she had made her selection with her eyes open, and was not disposed to quarrel with her bargain, because that which she had bought was no better than the article which she had known it to be when she was making her purchase. Nor was she even angry with her sister. "I will do the best I can, Hermy; you may be sure of that. But there are some things which it is useless to talk about."

"But it was as well you should know what Sir Charles said."

"I know quite enough of what he says, Hermy,—quite as much, I daresay, as you do. But, never mind. If Lord Ongar has given up smoking, I quite agree with you that it's a good thing. I wish they'd all give it up, for I hate the smell of it. Hugh has got worse and worse. He never cares about changing his clothes now."

"I'll tell you what it is," said Sir Hugh to his wife that night; "sixty thousand a year is a very fine income, but Julia will find she has caught a Tartar."

"I suppose he'll hardly live long; will he?"

"I don't know or care when he lives or when he dies; but, by heaven, he is the most overbearing fellow I ever had in the house with me. I wouldn't stand him here for another fortnight,—not even to make her all safe."

"It will soon be over. They'll be gone on Thursday."

"What do you think of his having the impudence to tell Cunliffe,"—Cunliffe was the head keeper;—"before my face, that he didn't know anything about pheasants! 'Well, my lord, I think we've got a few about the place,' said Cunliffe. 'Very few,' said Ongar, with a sneer. Now, if I haven't a better head of game here than he has at Courton, I'll eat him. But the impudence of his saying that before me!"

"Did you make him any answer?"

"There's about enough to suit me," I said. Then he skulked away, knocked off his pins. I shouldn't like to be his wife; I can tell Julia that."

"Julia is very clever," said the sister.

The day of the marriage came, and everything at Clavering was done with much splendour. Four bridesmaids came down from London on the preceding day; two were already staying in the house, and the two cousins came as two more from the rectory. Julia Brabazon had never been really intimate with Mary and Fanny Clavering, but she had known them well enough to make it odd if she did not ask them to come to her wedding and to take a part in the ceremony. And, moreover, she had thought of Harry and her little romance of other days. Harry, perhaps, might be glad to know that she had shown this courtesy to his sisters. Harry, she knew, would be away at his school. Though she had asked him whether he meant to come to her wedding, she had been better pleased that he should be absent. She had not many regrets herself, but

it pleased her to think that he should have them. So Mary and Fanny Clavering were asked to attend her at the altar. Mary and Fanny would both have preferred to decline, but their mother had told them that they could not do so. "It would make m-feeling," said Mrs. Clavering; "and that is what your papa particularly wishes to avoid."

"When you say papa particularly wishes anything, mamma, you always mean that you wish it particularly yourself," said Fanny. "But if it must be done, it must; and then I shall know how to behave when Mary's time comes."

The bells were rung lustily all the morning, and all the parish was there, round about the church, to see. There was no record of a lord ever having been married in Clavering church before; and now this lord was going to marry my lady's sister. It was all one as though she were a Clavering herself. But there was no ecstatic joy in the parish. There were to be no bonfires, and no eating and drinking at Sir Hugh's expense, —no comforts provided for any of the poor by Lady Clavering on that special occasion. Indeed, there was never much of such kindnesses between the lord of the soil and his dependants. A certain stipulated dole was given at Christmas for coals and blankets; but even for that there was generally some wrangle between the rector and the steward. "If there's to be all this row about it," the rector had said to the steward, "I'll never ask for it again." "I wish my uncle would only be as good as his word," Sir Hugh had said, when the rector's speech was repeated to him. Therefore, there was not much of real rejoicing in the parish on this occasion, though the bells were rung loudly, and though the people, young and old, did cluster round the churchyard to see the lord lead his bride out of the church. "A puir feckless thing, tottering along like,—not half the makings of a man. A stout lass like she could a'most blow him away wi' a puff of her mouth." That was the verdict which an old farmer's wife passed upon him, and that verdict was made good by the general opinion of the parish.

But though the lord might be only half a man, Julia Brabazon walked out from the church every inch a countess. Whatever price she might have paid, she had at any rate got the thing which she had intended to buy. And as she stepped into the chariot which carried her away to the railway station on her way to Dover, she told herself that she had done right. She had chosen her profession, as Harry Clavering had chosen his; and having so far succeeded, she would do her best to make her success perfect. Mercenary! Of course she had been mercenary. Were not all men and women mercenary upon whom devolved the necessity of earning their bread?

Then there was a great breakfast at the park,—for the quality,—and the rector on this occasion submitted himself to become the guest of the nephew whom he thoroughly disliked.

My Countrymen.

ABOUT a year ago, the *Saturday Review* published an article which gave me, as its articles often do give me, much food for reflection. The article was about the unjust estimate which, says the *Saturday Review*, I form of my countrymen, and about the indecency of talking of "British Philistines." It appears that I assume the truth of the transcendental system of philosophy, and then lecture my wiser countrymen because they will not join me in recognizing as eternal truths a set of platitudes which may be proved to be false. "Now there is in England a school of philosophy which thoroughly understands, and, on theoretical grounds, deliberately rejects, the philosophical theory which Mr. Arnold accuses the English nation of neglecting; and the practical efforts of the English people, especially their practical efforts in the way of criticism, are for the most part strictly in accordance with the principles of that philosophy."

I do not quite know what to say about the transcendental system of philosophy, for I am a mere dabbler in these great matters, and to grasp and hold a system of philosophy is a feat much beyond my strength; but I certainly did talk about British Philistines, and to call people Philistines when they are doing just what the wisest men in the country have settled to be quite right, does seem unreasonable, not to say indecent. Being really the most teachable man alive, I could not help making, after I had read the article in the *Saturday Review*, a serious return, as the French say, upon myself; and I resolved never to call my countrymen Philistines again till I had thought more about it, and could be quite sure I was not committing an indecency.

I was very much fortified in this good resolution by something else which happened about the same time. Every one knows that the heart of the English nation is its middle class; there had been a good deal of talk, a year ago, about the education of this class, and I, among others, had imagined it was not good, and that the middle class suffered by its not being better. But Mr. Bazley, the Member for Manchester, who is a kind of representative of this class, made a speech last year at Manchester, the middle-class metropolis, which shook me a good deal. "During the last few months," said Mr. Bazley, "there had been a cry that middle-class education ought to receive more attention. He confessed himself very much surprised by the clamour that was raised. He did not think that class need excite the sympathy either of the legislature or the public." Much to the same effect spoke Mr. Miall, another middle-class leader, in the *Nonconformist*: "Middle-class education seems to be the favourite topic of the hour, and we must confess to a feeling of shame

at the nonsense which is being uttered on the subject. It might be thought from what is said, that this section of the community, which has done everything else so well,—which has astonished the world by its energy, enterprise, and self-reliance, which is continually striking out new paths of industry and subduing the forces of nature,—cannot, from some mysterious reason, get their children properly educated." Still more strong were the words of the *Daily News* (I love to range all the evidence in black and white before me, though it tends to my own discomfiture) about the blunder some of us were making: "All the world knows that the great middle class of this country supplies the mind, the will, and the power for all the great and good things that have to be done, and it is not likely that that class should surrender its powers and privileges in the one case of the training of its own children. How the idea of such a scheme can have occurred to anybody, how it can have been imagined that parents and schoolmasters in the most independent, and active, and enlightened class of English society, how it can have been supposed that the class which has done all the great things that have been done in all departments, will beg the Government to send inspectors through its schools, when it can itself command whatever advantages exist, might seem unintelligible but for two or three considerations." These considerations do not much matter just now; but it is clear how perfectly Mr. Bazley's stand was a stand such as it becomes a representative man like Mr. Bazley to make, and how well the *Daily Telegraph* might say of the speech: "It was at once grand, genial, national, and distinct;" and the *Morning Star* of the speaker: "He talked to his constituents as Manchester people like to be talked to, in the language of clear, manly intelligence, which penetrates through sophisms, ignores commonplaces, and gives to conventional illusions their true value. His speech was thoroughly instinct with that earnest good sense which characterizes Manchester, and which, indeed, may be fairly set down as the general characteristic of England and Englishmen everywhere."

Of course if Philistinism is characteristic of the British nation just now, it must in a special way be characteristic of the representative part of the British nation, the part by which the British nation is what it is, and does all its best things, the middle class. And the newspapers, who have so many more means than I of knowing the truth, and who have that trenchant authoritative style for communicating it which makes so great an impression, say that the British middle class is characterized, not by Philistinism, but by enlightenment; by a passion for penetrating through sophisms, ignoring commonplaces, and giving to conventional illusions their true value. Evidently it is nonsense, as the *Daily News* says, to think that this great middle class which supplies the mind, the will, and the power for all the great and good things that have to be done, should want its schools, the nurseries of its admirable intelligence, meddled with. It may easily be imagined that all this, coming on the top of the *Saturday Review's* rebuke of me for indecency, was enough

to set me meditating ; and after a long and painful self-examination, I saw that I had been making a great mistake. I had been breaking one of my own cardinal rules : the rule to keep aloof from practice, and to confine myself to the slow and obscure work of trying to understand things, to see them as they are. So I was suffering deservedly in being taunted with hawking about my nostrums of State schools for a class much too wise to want them, and of an Academy for people who have an inimitable style already. To be sure I had said that schools ought to be things of local, not State, institution and management, and that we ought not to have an Academy ; but that makes no difference. I had been meddling with practice, proposing this and that, saying how it might be if we had established this or that. I saw what danger I had been running in thus intruding into a sphere where I have no business, and I resolved to offend in this way no more. Henceforward let Mr. Kinglake belabour the French as he will, let him describe as many tight merciless lips as he likes ; henceforward let Educational Homes stretch themselves out in *The Times* to the crack of doom, let Lord Fortescue bewitch the middle class with ever new blandishments, let any number of Mansion House meetings propound any number of patchwork schemes to avoid facing the real difficulty ; I am dumb. I let reforming and instituting alone ; I meddle with my neighbour's practice no more. *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still, and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still, and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still, and he that is holy, let him be holy still.*

This I say as a sincere penitent ; but I do not see that there is any harm in my still trying to know and understand things, if I keep humbly to that, and do not meddle with greater matters, which are out of my reach. So having once got into my head this notion of British Philistinism and of the want of clear and large intelligence in our middle class, I do not consider myself bound at once to put away and crush such a notion, as people are told to do with their religious doubts ; nor, when the *Saturday Review* tells me that no nation in the world is so logical as the English nation, and the *Morning Star*, that our grand national characteristic is a clear intelligence which penetrates through sophisms, ignores commonplaces, and gives to conventional illusions their true value, do I feel myself compelled to receive these propositions with absolute submission as articles of faith, transcending reason ; indeed, this would be transcendentalism, which the *Saturday Review* condemns. Canvass them, then, as mere matters of speculation, I may ; and having lately had occasion to travel on the Continent for many months, during which I was thrown in company with a great variety of people, I remembered what Burns says of the profitableness of trying to see ourselves as others see us, and I kept on the watch for anything to confirm or contradict my old notion, in which, without absolutely giving it up, I had begun certainly to be much shaken and staggered.

I must say that the foreign opinion about us is not at all like that of the *Saturday Review* and the *Morning Star*. I know how sadly the

foreigners envy us, and that this must warp their judgment; I know, too, that this test of foreign opinion can never be decisive; I only take it for what it is worth, and as a contribution to our study of the matter in question. But I do really think that the admirers of our great middle class, which has, as its friends and enemies both agree, risen into such preponderating importance of late years, and now returns the House of Commons, dictates the policy of Ministers, makes the newspapers speak with its voice, and in short governs the country,—I do think, I say, the admirers of this great class would be astounded if they could hear how cavalierly a foreigner treats this country of their making and managing. "It is not so much that we dislike England," a Prussian official, with the graceful tact of his nation, said to me the other day, "as that we think little of her." The *Cologne Gazette*, perhaps the chief newspaper of Germany, published in the summer a series of letters, much esteemed, I believe, by military men, on the armies of the leading Continental powers. The writer was a German officer, but not a Prussian. Speaking of the false military system followed by the Emperor Nicholas, whose great aim was to turn his soldiers into perfectly drilled machines, and contrasting this with the free play left to the individual soldier in the French system: "In consequence of their purely mechanical training," says this writer, "the Russians, in spite of their splendid courage, were in the Crimean war constantly beaten by the French, nay, decidedly beaten *even by the English and the Turks*."* Hardly a German newspaper can discuss territorial changes in Europe but it will add, after its remarks on the probable policy of France in this or that event: "England will probably make a fuss, but what England thinks is of no importance." I believe the German newspapers must keep a phrase of that kind stereotyped, they use it so often. France is our very good friend just now, but at bottom our "clear intelligence penetrating through sophisms," and so on, is not held in much more esteem there than in Germany. One of the gravest and most moderate of French newspapers—a newspaper, too, our very good friend, like France herself, into the bargain—broke out lately, when some jealousy of the proposed Cholera Commission in the East was shown on this side the water, in terms which, though less rough than the "great fool" of the *Saturday Review*, were still far from flattering. "Let us speak to these English the only language they can comprehend. England lives for her trade; Cholera interrupts trade; therefore it is for England's interest to join in precautions against Cholera."

Compliments of this sort are displeasing to remember, displeasing to repeat; but their abundance strikes the attention; and then the happy unconsciousness of those at whom they are aimed, their state of imperturbable self-satisfaction, strikes the attention too, and makes an inquisitive mind quite eager to see its way clearly in this apparent game of cross purposes. For ^{never} ~~never~~, surely, was there such a game of cross purposes

* Ja, selbst von den Engländern und Türkern entschieden geschlagen.

played. It came to its height when Lord Palmerston died the other day. Lord Palmerston was England; "the best type of our age and country," *The Times* well called him; he was "a great representative man, emphatically the English Minister;" the interpreter of the wishes of that great middle class of this country which supplies the mind, the will, and the power requisite for all the great and good things that have to be done, and therefore "acknowledged by a whole people as their best impersonation." Monsieur Thiers says of Pitt, that though he used and abused the strength of England, she was the second country in the world at the time of his death, and the first eight years afterwards. That was after Waterloo and the triumphs of Wellington. And that era of primacy and triumphs Lord Palmerston, say the English newspapers, has carried on to this hour. "What Wellington was as a soldier, that was Palmerston as a statesman." When I read these words in some foreign city or other, I could not help rubbing my eyes and asking myself if I was dreaming. Why, taking Lord Palmerston's career from 1830 (when he first became Foreign Secretary) to his death, there cannot be a shadow of doubt, for any one with eyes and ears in his head, that he found England the first Power in the world's estimation, and that he leaves her the third, after France and the United States. I am no politician; I mean no disparagement at all to Lord Palmerston, to whose talents and qualities I hope I can do justice; and indeed it is not Lord Palmerston's policy, or any Minister's policy, that is in question here, it is the policy of all of us, it is the policy of England; for in a government such as ours is at present, it is only, as we are so often reminded, by interpreting public opinion, by being "the best type of his age and country," that a Minister governs; and Lord Palmerston's greatness lay precisely in our all "acknowledging him as our best impersonation." Well, then, to this our logic, our practical efforts in the way of criticism, our clear manly intelligence penetrating through sophisms and ignoring commonplaces, and above all, our redoubtable phalanx possessing these advantages in the highest degree, our great middle class, which makes Parliament, and which supplies the mind, the will, and the power requisite for all the great and good things that have to be done, have brought us; to the third place in the world's estimation, instead of the first. He who disbelieves it, let him go round to every embassy in Europe and ask if it is not true.

The foreigners, indeed, are in no doubt as to the real authors of the policy of modern England; they know that ours is no longer a policy of Pitts and aristocracies, disposing of every movement of the hoodwinked nation to whom they dictate it; they know that our policy is now dictated by the strong middle part of England,—England happy, as Mr. Lowe, quoting Aristotle, says, in having her middle part strong and her extremes weak; and that, though we are administered by one of our weak extremes, the aristocracy, these managers administer us, as a weak extreme naturally must, with a nervous attention to the wishes of the strong middle part,

whose agents they are. It was not the aristocracy which made the Crimean war; it was the strong middle part—the constituencies. It was the strong middle part which showered abuse and threats on Germany for mishandling Denmark; and when Germany gruffly answered, *Come and stop us*, slapped its pockets, and vowed that it had never had the slightest notion of pushing matters so far as this. It was the strong middle part which, by the voice of its favourite newspapers, kept threatening Germany, after she had snapped her fingers at us, with a future chastisement from France, just as a smarting school-boy threatens his bully with a drubbing to come from some big boy in the background. It was the strong middle part, speaking through the same newspapers, which was full of coldness, slights, and sermons for the American Federals during their late struggle; and as soon as they had succeeded, discovered that it had always wished them well, and that nothing was so much to be desired as that the United States, and we, should be the fastest friends possible. Some people will say that the aristocracy was an equal offender in this respect: very likely; but the behaviour of the strong middle part makes more impression than the behaviour of a weak extreme; and the more so, because from the middle class, their fellows in numberless ways, the Americans expected sympathy, while from the aristocracy they expected none. And, in general, the faults with which foreigners reproach us in the matters named,—rash engagement, intemperate threatening, undignified retreat, ill-timed cordiality,—are not the faults of an aristocracy, by nature in such concerns prudent, reticent, dignified, sensitive on the point of honour; they are rather the faults of a rich middle class,—testy, absolute, ill-acquainted with foreign matters, a little ignoble, very dull to perceive when it is making itself ridiculous.

I know the answer one gets at home when one says that England is not very highly considered just now on the Continent. There is first of all the envy to account for it,—that of course; and then our clear intelligence is making a radical change in our way of dealing with the Continent; the old, bad, aristocratical policy of incessantly intermeddling with the affairs of the Continent,—this it is getting rid of; it is leaving the miserable foreigners to themselves, to their wars, despotisms, bureaucracy, and hatred of free, prosperous England. A few inconveniences may arise before the transition from our old policy to our new is fairly accomplished, and we quite leave off the habit of meddling where our own interests are not at stake. We may be exposed to a little mortification in the passage, but our clear intelligence will discern any occasion where our interests are really at stake. Then we shall come forward and prove ourselves as strong as ever; and the foreigners, in spite of their envy, know it. But what strikes me so much in all which these foreigners say is, that it is just this clear intelligence of ours that they appear at the present moment to hold cheap. Englishmen are often heard complaining of the little gratitude foreign nations show them for their sympathy, their good-will. The reason is, that the foreigners

think that an Englishman's good-will to a foreign cause, or dislike to it, is never grounded in a perception of its real merits and bearings, but in some chance circumstance. They say the Englishman never, in these cases, really comprehends the situation, and so they can never feel him to be in living sympathy with them. I have got into much trouble for calling my countrymen Philistines, and all through these remarks I am determined never to use that word; but I wonder if there can be anything offensive in calling one's countryman a young man from the country. I hope not; and if not, I should say, for the benefit of those who have seen Mr. John Parry's amusing entertainment, that England and Englishmen, holding forth on some great crisis in a foreign country,—Poland, say, or Italy,—are apt to have on foreigners very much the effect of the young man from the country who talks to the nursemaid after she has upset the perambulator. There is a terrible crisis, and the discourse of the young man from the country, excellent in itself, is felt not to touch the crisis vitally. Nevertheless, on he goes; the perambulator lies a wreck, the child screams, the nursemaid wrings her hands, the old gentleman storms, the policeman gesticulates, the crowd thickens; still, that astonishing young man talks on, serenely unconscious that he is not at the centre of the situation.

Happening to be much thrown with certain foreigners, who criticised England in this sort of way, I used often to think what a short and ready way one of our hard-hitting English newspapers would take with these scorers, if they fell into its hands. But being myself a mere seeker for truth, with nothing trenchant or authoritative about me, I could do no more than look shocked and begin to ask questions. "What!" I said, "you hold the England of to-day cheap, and declare that we do not comprehend the situation; yet you rate the England of 1815 so high, and call our fathers and grandfathers the foremost people in Europe. Did they comprehend the situation better than we?" "Yea," replied my foreign friends, "the situation as they had it, a great deal better. Their time was a time for energy, and they succeeded in it perfectly. Our time is a time for intelligence, and you are not succeeding in it at all."

Though I could not hear without a shudder this insult to the earnest good sense which, as the *Morning Star* says, may be fairly set down as the general characteristic of England and Englishmen everywhere, yet I pricked up my ears when my companions talked of energy, and England's success in a time for energy, because I have always had a notion myself that energy—energy with honesty—is England's great force; a greater force to her, even, than her talent for penetrating through sophisms and ignoring commonplaces; so I begged my acquaintances to explain a little more fully to me what they meant. "Nothing can be clearer," they answered. "Your *Times* was telling you the other day, with the enlightenment it so often shows at present, that instead of being proud of Waterloo and the great war which was closed by it, it really seemed as if you ought rather

to feel embarrassed at the recollection of them, since the policy for which they were fought is grown obsolete; the world has taken a turn which was not Lord Castlereagh's, and to look back on the great Tory war is to look back upon an endless account of blood and treasure wasted. Now, that is not so at all. What France had in her head, from the Convention, 'faithful to the principles of the sovereignty of the people, which will not permit them to acknowledge anywhere the institutions militating against it,' to Napoleon, with his 'immense projects for assuring to France the empire of the world,'—what she had in her head, along with many better and sounder notions destined to happier fortune, was *supremacy*. She had always a vision of a sort of federation of the States of Europe under the primacy of France. Now to this the world, whose progress no doubt lies in the direction of more concert and common purpose among nations, but these nations free, self-impelled, and living each its own life, was not moving. Whoever knocks to pieces a scheme of this sort does the world a service. In antiquity, Roman empire had a scheme of this sort, and much more. The barbarians knocked it to pieces—honour to the barbarians. In the middle ages Frederick the Second had a scheme of this sort. The Papacy knocked it to pieces—honour to the Papacy. In our own century, France had a scheme of this sort. Your fathers knocked it to pieces—honour to your fathers. They were just the people to do it. They had a vigorous lower class, a vigorous middle class, and a vigorous aristocracy. The lower class worked and fought, the middle class found the money, and the aristocracy wielded the whole. This aristocracy was high-spirited, reticent, firm, despising frothy declamation. It had all the qualities useful for its task and time; Lord Grenville's words, as early as 1798: 'England will never consent that France shall arrogate the power of annulling at her pleasure, and under the pretence of a pretended natural right, the political system of Europe;' these few words, with their lofty strength, contain, as one may say, the prophecy of future success: you hear the very voice of an aristocracy standing on sure ground, and with the stars in its favour. Well, you succeeded, and in 1815, after Waterloo, you were the first power in Europe. 'These people have a secret,' we all said; 'they have discerned the way the world was going, and therefore they have prevailed; while, on the other hand, the "stars in their courses fought against Sisera."' We held you in the greatest respect; we tried to copy your constitutional government; we read your writers. 'After the peace,' says George Sand, 'the literature of Great Britain crossed the straits, and came to reign amongst us.' It reigned in Byron and Scott, voices of the great aristocratical spirit which had just won the victory: Scott expressing its robust, genial conservatism, holding by a thousand roots to the past; Byron its defiant force and indomitable pride.

"We believed in you for a good while; but gradually it began to dawn upon us that the era for which you had had the secret was over, and that a new era, for which you had not the secret, was beginning. The work of the old era was to prevent the formation of a second Roman empire,

and to maintain a store of free, rich, various national lives for the future to work with and bring to harmony. This was a work of force, of energy : it was a work for an aristocratical power, since, as you yourself are always saying, aristocracies, poor in ideas, are rich in energy. You were a great aristocratical power, and did it. But then came an era with another work, a work of which it is the great glory of the French Revolution (pardon us for saying so, we know it makes some of your countrymen angry to hear it,) passionately to have embraced the idea; the work of making human life, hampered by a past which it has outgrown, natural and rational. This is a work of intelligence, and in intelligence an aristocratic power, as you know, does not so much shine. Accordingly, since the world has been steadily moving this way, you seem to have lost your secret, and we are gradually ceasing to believe in you. You will say, perhaps, that England is no longer an aristocratical power, but a middle-class power, wielded by an industrial middle class, as the England of your fathers was wielded by a territorial aristocracy. This may be so; and indeed, as the style, carriage, and policy of England have of late years been by no means those of an aristocratical power, it probably is so. But whatever class dictates it, your course, allow us to say, has not of late years been intelligent; has not, at any rate, been successful. And depend upon it, a nation who has the secret of her era, who discerns which way the world is going, is successful, keeps rising. Can you yourselves, with all your powers of self-satisfaction, suppose that the Crimean war raised you, or that your Indian mutiny raised you, or that your attitude in the Italian war raised you, as your performances at the beginning of the century raised you? Surely you cannot. You held your own, if you will; you showed tenacity; you saved yourselves from disaster; but you did not raise yourselves, did not advance one jot. Can you, on the other hand, suppose that your attitude in the Danish business, in the American business, has not lowered you? You are losing the instinct which tells people how the world is going; you are beginning to make mistakes; you are falling out of the front rank. The era of aristocracies is over; nations must now stand or fall by the intelligence of their middle class and their people. The people with you is still an embryo; no one can yet quite say what it will come to. You lean, therefore, with your whole weight upon the intelligence of your middle class. And intelligence, in the true sense of the word, your middle class has absolutely none."

I was aghast. I thought of this great class, every morning and evening extolled for its clear, manly intelligence by a hundred vigorous and influential writers; and though the fine enthusiasm of these writers had always seemed to me to be carrying them a little too far, and I had even been guilty of the indecency of now and then calling my countrymen Philistines, these foreign critics struck me as passing all bounds, and quite out-Heroding Herod. Fortunately I had just received from England a copy of Mr. Lowe's powerful and much-admired speech against Reform. I took it out of my pocket. "Now," said I to my envious, carping

foreigners, "just listen to me. You say that the early years of this century were a time for energy, and we did well in them; you say that the last thirty or forty years have been a time for intelligence, and we have done ill in them. Mr. Lowe shall answer you. Here is his reading of our last thirty or forty years' history, as made by our middle-class Parliament, as he calls it; by a Parliament, therefore, filled by the mind and will of this great class whose rule you disparage. Mr. Lowe says: 'The seven Houses of Commons that have sat since the Reform Bill have performed exploits unrivalled, not merely in the six centuries during which Parliament has existed, but in the whole history of representative assemblies.' He says: 'Look at the noble work, the heroic work which the House of Commons has performed within these thirty-five years. It has gone through and revised every institution of the country; it has scanned our trade, our colonies, our laws, and our municipal institutions; everything that was complained of, everything that had grown distasteful, has been touched with success and moderation by the amending hand. And to such a point have these amendments been carried, that when gentlemen come to argue this question, and do all in their power to get up a practical grievance, they fail in suggesting even one.' There is what Mr. Lowe says. You see we have nothing left to desire, absolutely nothing. As Mr. Lowe himself says: 'With all this continued peace, contentment, happiness, and prosperity,—England in its present state of development, and civilization,—the mighty fabric of English prosperity,—what can we want more?' Evidently nothing: therefore to propose 'for England to make a step in the direction of democracy is the strangest and wildest proposition ever broached by man.' People talk of America. 'In America the working classes are the masters; does anybody doubt that?' And compare, Mr. Lowe means, England, as the middle class is making her, with America, as the working classes are making her. How entirely must the comparison turn to the advantage of the English middle class! Then, finally, as to the figure we cut in the eyes of the world, our grandeur and our future, here is a crowning sentence, worthy of Lord Macaulay himself, whose style Mr. Lowe enthusiastically admires: '*The destiny of England is in the great heart of England!*'"

Mr. Bright had not then made his famous speech about the misdeeds of the Tories, but, if he had, I should certainly have added that our middle class, by these unrivalled exploits of theirs, had not only raised their country to an unprecedented height of greatness, but had also saved our foolish and obstructive aristocracy from being emptied into the Thames.

As it was, however, what I had urged, or rather what I had borrowed from Mr. Lowe, seemed to me exceedingly forcible, and I looked anxiously for its effect on my hearers. They did not appear so much disconcerted as I had hoped. "Undoubtedly," they said, "the coming of your middle class to power was a natural, salutary event, to be blessed, not anathematized. Aristocracies cannot deal with a time for intelligence; their sense

is for facts, not ideas. The world of ideas is the possible, the future ; the world of aristocracies is the established, the past, which has made their fortune and which they hope to prolong. No doubt your middle class found a great deal of commercial and social business waiting to be done, which your aristocratic governments had left undone, and had no talents for doing. Their talents were for other times and tasks ; for curbing the power of the Crown when other classes were too inconsiderable to do it ; for managing (if one compares them with other aristocracies) their affairs and their dependants with vigour, prudence, and moderation, during the feudal and patriarchal stage of society ; for wielding the force of their country against foreign powers with energy, firmness, and dignity. But then came the modern spirit, the modern time : the notion, as we say, of making human life more natural and rational ; or, as your philosophers say, of getting the greatest happiness for the greatest number. Have you succeeded, are you succeeding, in this hour of the many, as your aristocracy succeeded in the hour of the few ? You say you are ; you point to ' the noble work, the heroic work which the House of Commons has performed within these last thirty-five years ; everything that was complained of, everything that had grown distasteful, has been touched with success and moderation by the amending hand.' Allow us to set clap-trap on one side ; we are not at one of your public meetings. What is the modern problem ? to make human life, the life of society, all through, more natural and rational ; to have the greatest possible number of one's nation happy. Here is the standard by which we are to try ourselves and one another now, as national grandeur, in the old regal and aristocratical conception of it, was the standard formerly. Every nation must have wished to be England in 1815, tried by the old standard : must we all wish to be England in 1865, tried by the new standard ? Your aristocracy, you say, is as splendid, as fortunate, as enviable as ever : very likely ; but all the world cannot be aristocracy. What do you make of the mass of your society, of its vast middle and lower portion ? Are we to envy you your common people ; is our common people to wish to change places with yours ; are we to say that you, more than we, have the modern secret here ? Without insisting too much on the stories of misery and degradation which are perpetually reaching us, we will say that no one can mix with a great crowd in your country, no one can walk with his eyes and ears open through the poor quarters of your large towns, and not feel that your common people, as it meets one's eyes, is at present more raw, to say the very least, less enviable-looking, further removed from civilized and humane life, than the common people almost anywhere. Well, then, you are not a success, according to the modern standard, with your common people. Are you a success with your middle class ? They have the power now ; what have they made of themselves ? what sort of a life is theirs ? A life more natural, more rational, fuller of happiness, more enviable, therefore, than the life of the middle classes on the Continent ? Yes, you will say, because the English middle class is

the most industrious and the richest. But it is just here that you go a great deal too fast, and so deceive yourselves. What brings about, or rather tends to bring about, a natural, rational life, satisfying the modern spirit? This: the growth of a love of industry, trade, and wealth; the growth of a love of the things of the mind; and the growth of a love of beautiful things. There are body, intelligence, and soul all taken care of. Of these three factors of modern life, your middle class has no notion of any but one, the first. Their love of industry, trade, and wealth, is certainly prodigious; and their example has done us a great deal of good: we, too, are beginning to get this love, and we wanted it. But what notion have they of anything else? Do but look at them, look at their lives. Some of us know your middle class very well; a great deal better than your own upper class in general knows them. Your middle class is educated, to begin with, in the worst schools of your country, and our middle class is educated in the best of ours. What becomes of them after that? The fineness and capacity of a man's spirit is shown by his enjoyments; your middle class has an enjoyment in its business, we admit, and gets on well in business and makes money; but beyond that? Drugged with business, your middle class seems to have its sense blunted for any stimulus besides, except religion; it has a religion, narrow, unintelligent, repulsive. All sincere religion does something for the spirit, raises a man out of the bondage of his merely bestial part, and saves him; but the religion of your middle class is the very lowest form of intelligential life which one can imagine as saving. What other enjoyments have they? The newspapers, a sort of eating and drinking which are not to our taste, a literature of books almost entirely religious or semi-religious, books utterly unreadable by an educated class anywhere, but which your middle class consumes, they say, by the hundred thousand; and in their evenings, for a great treat, a lecture on teetotalism or nunneries. Can any life be imagined more hideous, more dismal, more unenviable? Compare it with the life of our middle class as you have seen it on the Rhine this summer, or at Lausanne, or Zurich. The world of enjoyment, so liberalizing and civilizing, belongs to the middle classes there, as well as the world of business; the whole world is theirs, they possess life; in England the highest class seems to have the monopoly of the world of enjoyment, the middle class enjoys itself, as your Shakspeare would say, in hugger-mugger, and possesses life only by reading in the newspapers, which it does devoutly, the doings of great people. Well then, we do not at all want to be as your middle class; we want to learn from it to do business and to get rich, and this we are learning a great deal faster than you think; but we do not, like your middle class, fix our consummation here: we have a notion of a whole world besides not dreamed of in your middle class's philosophy; so they, too, like your common people, seem to us no success. They may be the masters of the modern time with you, but they are not solving its problem. They cannot see the way the world is going, and the future

does not belong to them. Talk of the present state of development and civilization of England, meaning England as they represent it to us ! Why, the capital, pressing danger of England, is the barbarism of her middle class ; the civilization of her middle class is England's capital, pressing want.⁴

"Well, but," said I, still catching at Mr. Lowe's powerful help, "the Parliament of this class has performed exploits unrivalled not merely in the six centuries during which Parliament has existed, but in the whole history of representative assemblies. The exploits are there : all the reforms we have made in the last five-and-thirty years."

"Let us distinguish," replied the envious foreigners, "let us distinguish. We named three powers—did we not?—which go to spread that rational humane life which is the aim of modern society : the love of wealth, the love of intelligence, the love of beauty. Your middle class, we agreed, has the first ; its commercial legislation, accordingly, has been very good, and in advance of that of foreign countries. Not that free-trade was really brought about by your middle class : it was brought about, as important reforms always are, by two or three great men. However, let your middle class, which had the sense to accept free trade, have the credit of it. But this only brings us a certain way. The legislation of your middle class in all that goes to give human life more intelligence and beauty, is no better than was to be expected from its own want of both. It is nothing to say that its legislation in these respects is an improvement upon what you had before ; that is not the question ; you are holding up its achievements as absolutely admirable, as unrivalled, as a model to us. You may have done—for you—much for religious toleration, social improvement, public instruction, municipal reform, law reform ; but the French Revolution and its consequences have done, upon the Continent, a great deal more. Such a spectacle as your Irish Church Establishment you cannot find in France or Germany. Your Irish land-question you hardly dare to face,—Stein settled as threatening a land-question in Prussia. Of the schools for your middle class we have already spoken ; while these schools are what they are, while the schools for your poor are maintained in the expensive, unjust, irrational way they are, England is full of endowments and foundations, capable by themselves, if properly applied, of putting your public education on a much better footing. In France and Germany all similar funds are thus employed, having been brought under public responsible management ; in England they are left to private irresponsible management, and are, in nine cases out of ten, wasted. You talk of municipal reform ; and cities and the manner of life in them have, for the modern business of promoting a more rational and humane life in the great body of the community, incalculable importance. Do you suppose we should tolerate in France, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, your London corporation and London vestries, and London as they make it ? In your provincial towns you do better ; but even there, do the municipalities show a tenth part either of the intelligence or the care for

the ends, as we have laid them down, of modern society, that our municipalities show? Your middle-class man thinks it the highest pitch of development and civilization when his letters are carried twelve times a day from Islington to Camberwell, and from Camberwell to Islington, and if railway-trains run to and fro between them every quarter of an hour. He thinks it is nothing that the trains only carry him from an illiberal, dismal life at Islington to an illiberal, dismal life at Camberwell; and the letters only tell him that such is the life there. A Swiss burgher takes Heaven knows how many hours to go from Berne to Geneva, and his trains are very few; this is an extreme on the other side; but compare the life the Swiss burgher finds or leaves at Berne or Geneva with the life of the middle class in your English towns. Or else you think to cover everything by saying: 'We are free! we are free! Our newspapers can say what they like!' Freedom, like Industry, is a very good horse to ride—but to ride somewhere. You seem to think that you have only got to get on the back of your horse Freedom, or your horse Industry, and to ride away as hard as you can, to be sure of coming to the right destination. If your newspapers can say what they like, you think you are sure of being well advised. That comes of your inaptitude for ideas, and aptitude for clap-trap; you can never see the two sides of a question; never perceive that every human state of things, even a good one, has its inconveniences. We can see the conveniences of your state well enough; and the inconveniences of ours, of newspapers not free, and prefects over-busy; and there are plenty of us who proclaim them. You eagerly repeat after us all we say that redounds to your own honour and glory; but you never follow our example yourselves. You are full of acuteness to perceive the ill influence of our prefects on us; but if any one says to you, in your turn, 'The English system of a great landed aristocracy keeps your lower class a lower class for ever, and materialises and vulgarises your whole middle class,' you stare vacantly at the speaker, you cannot even take in his ideas; you can only blurt forth, in reply, some clap-trap or other about a 'system of such tried and tested efficiency as no other country was ever happy enough to possess since the world was a world.'"

I have observed in my travels, that most young gentlemen of our highest class go through Europe, from Calais to Constantinople, with one sentence on their lips, and one idea in their minds, which suffices, apparently, to explain all that they see to them: *Foreigners don't wash*. No doubt, thought I to myself, my friends have fallen in with some distinguished young Britons of this sort, and had their feelings wounded by them; hence their rancour against our aristocracy. And as to our middle class, foreigners have no notion how much this class, with us, contains; how many shades and gradations in it there are, and how little what is said of one part of it will apply to another. Something of this sort I could not help urging aloud. "You do not know," I said, "that there is broken off, as one may say, from the top of our middle class, a large fragment, which receive the best education the country can give, the same

education as our aristocracy; which is perfectly intelligent and which enjoys life perfectly. These men do the main part of our intellectual work, write all our best newspapers; and cleverer people, I assure you, are nowhere to be found."

: "Clever enough," was the answer, "but they show not much intelligence, in the true sense of the word,—not much intelligence of the way the world is going. Whether it is that they must try to hit your current public opinion, which is not intelligent; whether it is that, having been, as you say, brought up with your aristocracy, they have been too much influenced by it, have taken, half insensibly, an aristocracy's material standard, and do not believe in ideas; certain it is that their intelligence has no ardour, no plan, leads them nowhere; it is ineffectual. Your intellect is at this moment, to an almost unexampled degree, without influence on the intellect of Europe."

While this was being said, I noticed an Italian, who was one of our party, fumbling with his pocket-book, from whence he presently produced a number of grey newspaper slips, which I could see were English. "Now just listen to me for a moment," he cried, "and I will show you what makes us say, on the Continent, that you English have no sense for logic, for ideas, and that your praise and blame, having no substantial foundation, are worth very little. You remember the famous French pamphlet before our war began in 1859: *Napoleon the Third and Italy*. The pamphlet appealed, in the French way, to reason and first principles; the upshot of it was this: 'The treaties which bind governments would be invariably only if the world was immovable. A power which should intrench itself behind treaties in order to resist modifications demanded by general feeling would have doubtless on her side an acquired right, but she would have against her moral right and universal conscience.' You English, on the other hand, took your stand on things as they were: 'If treaties are made,' said your *Times*, 'they must be respected. Tear one, and all are waste paper.' Very well; this is a policy, at any rate, an aristocratical policy; much may be said for it. *The Times* was full of contempt for the French pamphlet, an essay, as it called it, 'conveying the dreams of an agitator expressed in the language of an academician.' It said: 'No one accustomed to the pithy comments with which liberty notices passing history, can read such a production without complacency that he does not live in the country which produces it. To see the heavy apparatus of an essay brought out to solve a question on which men have corresponded and talked and speculated in the funds, and acted in the most practical manner possible for a month past, is as strange as if we beheld some spectral review,' and so on. Still very well; there is the strong practical man despising theories and reveries. 'The sentiment of race is just now threatening to be exceedingly troublesome. It is to a considerable extent in our days a literary revival.' That is all to the same effect. Then came a hitch in our affairs, and fortune seemed as if she was going to give, as she often does give, the anti-theorists a triumph. 'The Italian

plot,' cried *The Times*, 'has failed. The Emperor and his familiars know not the moral strength which is still left in the enlightened communities of Europe. To the unanimous and indignant reprobation of English opinion is due the failure of the imperial plots. While silence and fear reign everywhere abroad, the eyes and ears of the Continent are turned continually to these Islands. English opinion has been erected into a kind of Areopagus.' Our business went forward again, and your English opinion grew very stern indeed. 'Sardinia,' said *The Times*, 'is told very plainly that she has deserted the course by which alone she could hope either to be happy or great, and abandoned herself to the guidance of fatal delusions, which are luring her on to destruction. By cultivating the arts of peace she would have been solving, in the only possible way, the difficult problem of Italian independence. She has been taught by France to look instead to the acquisition of fresh territory by war and conquest. She has now been told with perfect truth by the warning voice of the British Parliament that she has not a moment to lose in retracing her steps, if indeed her penitence be not too late.' Well, to make a long story short, we did not retrace our steps; we went on, as you know; we succeeded; and now let us make a jump from the spring to the autumn. Here is your unanimous English opinion, here is your Areopagus, here is your *Times*, in October: 'It is very irregular (Sardinia's course), it is contrary to all diplomatic forms. Francis the Second can show a thousand texts of international law against it. Yes; but there are extremities beyond all law, and there are laws which existed before even society was formed. There are laws which are implanted in our nature, and which form part of the human mind.' and so on. Why, here you have entirely boxed the compass and come round from the aristocratical programme to the programme of the French pamphlet, 'the dreams of an agitator in the language of the rhetorician!' And you approved not only our present but our past, and kindly took off your ban of reprobation issued in February. 'How great a change has been effected by the wisely courageous policy of Sardinia! The firmness and boldness which have raised Italy from degradation form the enduring character of a ten years' policy. King Victor Emmanuel and his sagacious counsellor have achieved success by remembering that fortune favours the bold.' There you may see why the mind of France influences the Continent so much and the mind of England so little. France has intelligence enough to perceive the ideas that are moving, or are likely to move, the world; she believes in them, sticks to them, and shapes her course to suit them. You neither perceive them nor believe in them, but you play with them like counters, taking them up and laying them down at random, and following really some turn of your imagination, some gust of liking or disliking. When I heard some of your countrymen complaining of Italy and her ingratitude for English sympathy, I made, to explain it, the collection of those extracts and of a good many more. They are all at your service; I have some here from the *Saturday Review*, which you will find exactly

follow suit with those from *The Times*." "No, thank you," I answered, "*The Times* is enough. My relations with the *Saturday Review* are rather tight-stretched, as you say here, already; make me a party to none of your quarrels with them."

After this my original tormentor once more took up his parable. "You see now what I meant," he said, "by saying that you did better in the old time, in the day of aristocracies. An aristocracy has no ideas, but it has a policy,—to resist change. In this policy it believes, it sticks to it; when it is beaten in it, it holds its tongue. This is respectable, at any rate. But your great middle class, as you call it, your present governing power, having no policy, except that of doing a roaring trade, does not know what to be at in great affairs,—blows hot and cold by turns,—makes itself ridiculous in short. It was a good aristocratical policy to have helped Austria in the Italian war; it was a good aristocratical policy to have helped the South in the American war. 'The days of aristocratical policy are over for you; with your new middle-class public opinion you cut, in Italy, the figure our friend here has just shown you; in America you scold right and left, you get up a monster memorial to deprecate the further effusion of blood; you lament over the abridgment of civil liberty by people engaged in a struggle for life and death, and meaning to win; and when they turn a deaf ear to you and win, you say, 'Oh, now let us be one great united Anglo-Saxon family and astonish the world.' This is just of a piece with your threatening Germany with the Emperor of the French. Do you not see that all these blunders dispose the Americans, who are very shrewd, and who have been succeeding as steadily as you have been failing, to answer: 'We have got the lead, no thanks to you, and we mean to astonish the world without you.' Unless you change, unless your middle class grows more intelligent, you will tell upon the world less and less, and end by being a second Holland. We do not hold you cheap for saying you will wash your hands of all concerns but your own, that you do not care a rush for influence in Europe; though this sentence of your Lord Bolingbroke is true: 'The opinion of mankind, which is fame after death, is superior strength and power in life.' We hold you cheap because you show so few signs, except in the one department of industry, of understanding your time and its tendencies, and of exhibiting a modern life which shall be a signal success. And the reaction is the stronger, because, after 1815, we believed in you as now-a-days we are coming to believe in America. You had won the last game, and we thought you had your hand full of trumps, and were going to win the next. Now the game has begun to be played, and we have an inkling of what your cards are; we shrewdly suspect you have scarcely any trumps at all."

I am no arguer, as is well known, "and every puny whipster gets my sword." So, instead of making bad worse by a lame answer, I held my tongue, consoling myself with the thought that these foreigners get from us, at any rate, plenty of Rolands for any stray Oliver they may

have the luck to give us. I have since meditated a good deal on what was then said, but I cannot profess to be yet quite clear about it. However, all due deductions made for envy, exaggeration, and injustice, enough stuck by me of these remarks on our logic, criticism, and love of intelligence, to determine me to go on trying (taking care, of course, to steer clear of indecency) to keep my mind fixed on these, instead of singing hosannahs to our actual state of development and civilization. The old recipe, to think a little more and bustle a little less, seemed to me still the best recipe to follow. So I take comfort when I find the *Guardian* reproaching me with having no influence; for I know what influence means,—a party, practical proposals, action; and I say to myself: “Even suppose I could get some followers, and assemble them, brimming with affectionate enthusiasm, in a committee-room at some inn; what on earth should I say to them? what resolutions could I propose? I could only propose the old Socratic commonplace, *Know thyself*; and how blank they would all look at that!” No; to inquire, perhaps too curiously, what that present state of English development and civilization is, which according to Mr. Lowe is so perfect that to give votes to the working class is stark madness; and, on the other hand, to be less sanguine about the divine and saving effect of a vote on its possessor than my friends in the committee-room at the “Spotted Dog,”—that is my inevitable portion. To bring things under the light of one’s intelligence, to see how they look there, to accustom oneself simply to regard the Marylebone Vestry, or the Educational Home, or the Irish Church Establishment, or our railway management, or our Divorce Court, or our gin-palaces open on Sunday and the Crystal Palace shut, as absurdities—that is, I am sure, invaluable exercise for us just at present. Let all persist in it who can, and steadily set their desires on introducing, with time, a little more soul and spirit into the too, too solid flesh of English society.

I have a friend who is very sanguine, in spite of the dismal croakings of these foreigners, about the turn things are even now taking amongst us. “Mean and ignoble as our middle class looks,” he says, “it has this capital virtue, it has seriousness. With frivolity, cultured or uncultured, you can do nothing; but with seriousness there is always hope. Then, too, the present bent of the world towards amusing itself, so perilous to the highest class, is curative and good for our middle class. A piano in a quaker’s drawing-room is a step for him to more humane life; nay, perhaps, even the penny gaff of the poor East-Londoner is a step for him to more humane life; it is—what example shall we choose?—it is *Strathmore*, let us say,—it is the one-pound-eleven-and-sixpenny gaff of the young gentlemen of the clubs and the young ladies of Belgravia, that is for them but a step in the primrose path to the everlasting bonfire. Besides, say what you like of the ideallessness of aristocracies, the vulgarity of our middle class, the immaturity of our lower, and the poor chance which a happy type of modern life has between them, consider this: Of all that makes life liberal and humane,—of light, of ideas, of culture,

—every man in every class of society who has a dash of genius in him is the boon friend. By his bringing up, by his habits, by his interest, he may be their enemy; by the primitive, unalterable complexion of his nature, he is their friend. Therefore, the movement of the modern spirit will be more and more felt among us, it will spread, it will prevail. Nay," this enthusiast often continues, getting excited as he goes on, "*The Times* itself, which so stirs some people's indignation—what is *The Times* but a gigantic Sancho Panza, to borrow a phrase of your friend Heine;—a gigantic Sancho Panza, following by an attraction he cannot resist that poor, mad, scorned, suffering, sublime enthusiast, the modern spirit; following it, indeed, with constant grumbling, expostulation, and opposition, with airs of protection, of compassionate superiority, with an incessant byplay of nods, shrugs, and winks addressed to the spectators; following it, in short, with all the incurable recalcitrancy of a lower nature, but still following it?" When my friend talks thus, I always shake my head, and say that this sounds very like the transcendentalism which has already brought me into so many scrapes.

I have another friend again (and I am grown so cowed by all the rebuke my original speculations have drawn upon me that I find myself more and more filling the part of a mere listener), who calls himself Anglo-Saxon rather than English, and this is what he says: "We are a small country," he says, "and our middle class has, as you say, not much gift for anything but making money. Our freedom and wealth have given us a great start, our capital will give us for a long time an advantage; but as other countries grow better-governed and richer, we must necessarily sink to the position to which our size and our want of any eminent gift for telling upon the world spiritually, doom us. But look at America; it is the same race; whether we are first or they, Anglo-Saxonism triumphs. You used to say that they had all the Philistinism of the English middle class from which they spring, and a great many faults of their own besides. But you noticed, too, that, blindly as they seemed following in general the star of their god Buncombe, they showed, at the same time, a feeling for ideas, a vivacity and play of mind, which our middle class has not, and which comes to the Americans, probably, from their democratic life, with its ardent hope, its forward stride, its gaze fixed on the future. Well, since these great events have lately come to purge and form them, how is this intelligence of theirs developing itself? Now they are manifesting a quick sense to see how the world is really going, and a sure faith, indispensable to all nations that are to be great, that greatness is only to be reached by going that way and no other? And then, if you talk of culture, look at the culture their middle, and even their working class is getting, as compared with the culture ours are getting. The trash which circulates by the hundred thousand among our middle class has no readers in America; our rubbish is for home-consumption; all our best books, books which are read here only by the small educated class, are in

America the books of the great reading public. So over there they will advance spiritually as well as materially ; and if our race at last flowers to modern life there, and not here, does it so much matter ? " So says my friend, who is, as I premised, a devotee of Anglo-Saxonism ; I, who share his pious frenzy but imperfectly, do not feel quite satisfied with these plans of vicarious greatness, and have a longing for this old and great country of ours to be always great in herself, not only in her progeny. So I keep looking at her, and thinking of her, and as often as I consider how history is a series of waves, coming gradually to a head and then breaking, and that, as the successive waves come up, one nation is seen at the top of this wave, and then another of the next, I ask myself, counting all the waves which have come up with England on the top of them : When the great wave which is now mounting has come up, will she be at the top of it ? *Illa nihil, nec me quarentem vana moratur.*

Yes, we arraign her ; but she,
The weary Titan, with deaf
Ears, and labour-dimm'd eyes,
Regarding neither to right
Nor left, goes passively by,
Staggering on to her goal,
Bearing, on shoulders immense,
Atlantéan, the load,
Wellnigh not to be borne,
Of the too vast orb of her fate.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

My Experience in a Greek Quarantine.

HAVING occasion during the past summer to go from one of the Turkish islands of the Mediterranean over to European terra-firma, I was obliged to go to Syra, the entrepôt of the Levant, to take passage in the Austrian Lloyd's steamer ; but as the Cholera panic and the restrictions laid on the steamers from all Turkish ports had virtually stopped regular communication with Greek ports, I was obliged to borrow the yacht of an English friend who happened to be visiting us at the time. Our island had had no case of Cholera, and indeed had never been visited by it ; its general healthfulness was all that could be desired by the most exacting Board of Health, and as, moreover, we were fortified with English, Turkish, and Greek bills of health, I anticipated at the worst a detention of four or five days previous to being permitted to land.

We had a charming run of thirty odd hours, with just wind enough to make a landsman love the sea, and sighting Syra in the morning, stood directly in for the port. Half a mile off the mole-head we met a man-of-war's boat, the Greek blue and white stripes flying out from the stern, and received a most peremptory warning to go no nearer, fearfully shouted from a safe distance ; and on learning that we were from a Turkish port, the officer ordered us off to Delos for eleven days' quarantine, declining even to look at our bill of health or hear any protest or explanations.

Those who have been at Syra may remember to the west of that port, and about ten miles away, a low, bare, and rocky island, which few people ever visit, and on which only two or three herdsmen live. On closer inspection one finds that what seemed to be one is really two islands, the larger called sometimes Rhenée, and sometimes the greater Delos, the smaller the true Delos, site of the famous temple of Apollo. In a bay on the south-eastern side of the former, the *Sylph* (I am sufficiently inexact in details as I have occasionally to pass through Syra, and don't care to have my identity discovered,) cast anchor, and the so-called lazaretto being only an insignificant collection of huts, built of rough boards, I elected to perform quarantine on board, even at the cost of detaining the *Sylph* longer than her owner had calculated. In fact the bare, dry, even burnt look of the island, without a shrub, a spring, or a living thing on it except a few guardiani and some luckless passengers of an English steamer which had preceded us by a few days, gave small hope of being able to pass eleven days of idleness endurably, in the heat of midsummer, where the sun is as fervent as on the south side of a Greek island. The steamer was from Alexandria, with over two hundred passengers on board, mostly *Syriotes* and other Greeks flying from the Cholera, then in the beginning

of its fury at that city; therefore they were most naturally put into quarantine. Their term was fourteen days, I believe, of which nearly a week had passed without any symptoms of sickness of any kind. We were near enough to hail across to her on still days and hear the complaints of the captain roared at sympathetic ears in good broad English, and witness by eye and ear the facts I am about to narrate, which I challenge the most patriotic and mendacious inhabitant of Syra to contradict.

The captain of the steamer having, like myself, only calculated on a few days' observation, had provided himself with sufficient stores for the time for his few cabin passengers, the great bulk of those on board being deck passengers, who provide themselves with food for the voyage. These had been exhausted soon after their arrival at quarantine; and the captain, praying in vain for supplies from the authorities of Syra, began to furnish his ship's supplies; for it was impossible, as he said, to see the poor people starve. But these supplies, abundant for his proper ends, would go but a little way in feeding that hungry multitude, and were threatened with exhaustion before the townspeople should awaken their Christianity from its sleep of, I imagine, about seventeen centuries. The captain appealed in vain to them to save their countrymen from starvation.^a They were not bound, they said, to provide food for people because they found them in quarantine. So the captain gave out all his stores, little by little, and shouted across to me to know if I had any to spare. The *Sylph* carried a crew of twelve men, and we naturally had two or three barrels of hard bread and salt beef stowed away for emergencies; and though what we could give them, with proper regard to our own needs, could be little more than a few hours' respite from starvation, it was impossible to withhold it.

The captain was an incarnate protest, a deck-walking imprecation on the miserly authorities of Syra. The people in his ship were not his own countrymen, but Greeks; he was under no obligation to provide a mouthful for one of them; they had no money to buy, and he had no authority to buy for them except from his own funds—to have done which he must have been a Roman prince or an English banker. So he wrote, and begged, and protested. He wrote to the English consul, Mr. Lloyd, and Mr. Lloyd stormed at the nomarch and demarch by turns in vain. The Syriotes would not send, and the consul could not—save a little for the captain and crew; and provisions were not only not supplied by the board of health, but permission to carry them off was denied those who would have taken them—so great was the panic at the idea of communication with the ship. Mr. Lloyd succeeded now and then in sending a small supply by the *guarda-costia*, and they bought now and then a kid of the herdsmen on the "clean" part of the island, at exorbitant rates. But they, too, finally refused to communicate; and then the captain wrote to the consul—I saw the letter afterwards—"For three days my men have had no bread, and two of them have gone raving mad." Amongst the cabin-passengers was a Frenchwoman, pregnant and near her confinement; for her the captain begged

for a doctor or nurse in vain—none would venture ; and when the time was come the poor mother had only the kindly care of the captain and her fellow-passengers, among whom was no woman or person competent to care for her. Fortunately, she passed through her trial safely.

In the meanwhile, Mr. Lloyd kept up his protests and remonstrances to people and government—protested against the inhumanity and the illegality of the whole thing—begged for relief to deaf ears : “ Bettei,” they said, “ that a few should suffer, than that forty thousand should incur the peril of Cholera. To allow people to carry provisions to the island was to run danger of communication with contagion.” The only reply of any significance that Mr. Lloyd got was a threat of burning his house over his head if he persisted in attempting to bring Cholera into Syra.

We, knowing nothing of this little turmoil, lay quietly under the intense sun waiting the lapse of time. The Greeks on the steamer might starve, but we were perhaps thankful that they were only Greeks ; we should wear through well enough, and then be free. Mr. Lloyd finally wrote to Athens ; the government at Athens ordered an examination ; and then the demos, under compulsion, voted meagre supplies to their famished countrymen.

But our fates were merciless. A few days, very few, before the steamer's time had expired, a ship arrived from Alexandria which actually had the Cholera on board ! Twenty or more had died and were thrown overboard on the voyage, as we afterwards learned, and several more were sick. As she came into the quarantine anchoring-ground and cast anchor, she dragged some distance, and seemed in a fair way to drift against the armed cutter which was doing duty as *guarda-costa* and *capo-guardiano*. The brave fellow—(I hope he wasn't a sailor)—ran out his guns, and prepared to sink the ship and all on board, lest she should come into contact with him. That scene is one I shall never forget and hardly ever forgive : the huddled passengers driven on deck by the pestilence and heat, and doubtless, already in a frenzy of fear from the perils within, found themselves met on the threshold of deliverance from their awful fellow-voyager by the open mouths of Greek carronades. Women shrieked and men howled with fright ; all prayed, supplicating the gods and the captain ; the *guarda-costa* people were in a worse panic, if possible,—shouted orders and counter-orders, ran out a gun and ran it in again, threatened, prayed and cursed, as though doom was on them. This horror of the Cholera seemed to have become a madness in the Greek mind. Our sailors gave the wretches the benefit of much good and strong English, which I fear was sadly wasted, and would have been equally so had it been equally good Greek ; but I noticed that our *guardiano* was stricken with fear at the bare idea of the vicinity of the infected ship. What the extent of the contagion was, we knew not of course ; but the hurrying and trepidation of the people on board, and in the boat which came alongside, made it evident that something unusual was going on. The boat lay far off, and the officers shouted very loudly ; and we heard afterwards from the quarantine-boat

that there were four or five dead of Cholera on board, ~~whom they wanted~~ to send on shore to be buried, but this was refused as dangerous! then to be permitted to sink them in the sea—this was still less to be allowed. They begged for a doctor—no one would go: *guardiani* even would not go on board, for any compensation, and they rowed away, leaving her to her fate. We shortly after received an intimation that by reason of this new arrival, all ships in quarantine at that time must stay fourteen days more!

My own wrath at Greek inhumanity had been already so largely excited that I could get no angrier at this new tyranny—in fact, I thought more of the steamer and its already half-starved and, even, in some cases, dying people, than of myself; and if I had had the pestilence in the hollow of my hand, I should, I fear, have visited Syra as Egypt never was visited. But the most appalling thought was of that luckless ship with Death holding revel on her, and the living bound to the dead.

Here was the ship of the ancient mariner, in sooth—anchored only, but with anchors almost useless on that tranquil sea, the fiery sun above, and the glassy water below, and nothing to break that awful monotony but the merciless quarantine-boat coming to ask and refuse. We could see the people on the ship gather on the forecastle and in the rigging, looking out to the land, which, brown and dry as it was, was to them a refuge. The second and the third day came, and the dead multiplied, until ten or a dozen corpses were on board. Still no physician, no landing, no burial even; and the plague-stricken ship and its dying cargo lay still under the August sun. The third day the crew received permission to put the bodies overboard, tied with ropes, that they might not drift away and carry to some accursed Greek community the plague it merited. I may be unjust, but those days have made me detest and abhor the very name of Syra and its people. We saw the dead lowered overboard, one by one, and with glasses could see them floating alongside, horrible to sight and fancy.

I am only dealing with facts,—facts which will be confirmed by the testimony of many who passed those broiling August days in that quarantine. No physician could be found in Syra who had humanity enough to hear the cry of that suffering company, or venture on the plague-stricken ship. They did finally get permission to bury the dead, all but one mother and child, who drifted loose, and was cast on some unknown shore, or fed the fishes; and finally a Danish physician came, a volunteer from—I regret to say I know not where, nor even do I know his name. I did not think then to enable myself to render him the honour he deserves; and finally the sick were landed. There had been a hundred and forty passengers on board when the ship left Alexandria, and there were over a hundred when she came to quarantine—the untouched remaining on board until they were attacked in their turn, and were carried ashore to die. Their provisions, too, were failing, and at last starvation came to help the pestilence.

I sought distraction and pastime amongst the sailors, of whom

two had attracted my attention during the run over. One of them I judged to be an American at first sight, the incarnation of "go-a-head" and nervous energy. I had seen him at the wheel the first day out, as I sat aft taking my fruit after dinner, and tempted him to affability by a huge slice of melon, which he ate without ever taking his eye for more than an instant from the course of the yacht. The next day they were apples that broke the silence; when, abruptly turning round to me, he asked if I was a freemason. He was, and evidently did not understand how one could treat a sailor with courtesy or kindness without some such motive as that mystic brotherhood is supposed to furnish. He wore a black wide-awake crowded close down to his eyes, which looked sharp out from under black, clear-drawn eyebrows. His nose was prominent, pointed, and straight, and his mouth full of decision; lips close-pressed, and chin small and slightly retreating. He carried his head habitually a little forward, as if on the look-out, and reminded me in his *ensemble* more of a clipper than anything I ever saw in flesh. He was taciturn, however, and absolutely refused to talk of himself. The other, who responded to the name of Bill, was certainly one of the best examples of the English sailor I have ever met,—robust, thick-set, with large brain and full beard, a frank blue eye, and an off-hand manner familiar to all who permitted it, but respectful to the highest degree, and speaking the English of a man who had had some education. In the first days of our imprisonment he had surprised me not a little by offering to lend me some old numbers of reviews and magazines, written on the margins of which I found some shrewd comments, and with some bits of drawing. I am not going to write his story, and shall not repeat what I learned of a life ruined by an uncontrollable spirit of adventure and unimproved opportunities; I have only to do with him now as he wove himself into the web of our quarantine life.

It was from Bill that I learned what I first knew of Aleck; that he was, as I had supposed, an American, had been in the Confederate service, and had even served on the *Alabama*. After finding out so much, I tried hard to make him talk about himself, but in vain. He was respectful, but not communicative on any subject, and least so on himself. But the new excitement of the Cholera-ship and its horrors made a certain difference. I certainly felt more like getting near my fellow-men, and they, and especially Aleck, were more oblivious of the difference between them and me. The immediate cause of the breaking of the ice was the sight of a poor woman standing on the poop of the Cholera-ship as she drifted towards us from her anchorage, before a slight easterly air, that brought the woman's voice down to us in supplications which we could from time to time partially distinguish, and which were for bread, bread, bread! We could see others on board climbing on the bulwarks, standing on the poop or forecastle, according to the end of the ship which drifted nearest us; but we could hear no other voice, though we doubted not that many were joined with hers. Beside her we saw, later, another female figure, whom,

by the aid of the glass, I believed I could make out to be her daughter. The latter made no sound that we could hear, but sat mutely or stood with her arm around the other, while ever and anon we heard that heartrending cry, "*Psomé! psomé!* (bread! bread!)" At sunset that day we were all together on the forecastle, better friends through our common pity. We proposed to our taciturn *guardiano* to send some bread on board the ship, but he absolutely refused to lend himself to any such risk of contagion, and forbade any attempt to communicate either with the ship or the shore where the sick were; and to tell the truth, it was not pleasant to contemplate the chances of being put in quarantine for an additional indefinite term, for having, even in a kindly work, come in real or fancied contact with the disease. But as the authority of the *guardiano* was absolute, we could do nothing in the matter openly, though it was determined in council by us three to do something in some way, if relief was not brought soon.

From the forecastle next morning we saw in the early light the two hapless creatures in the same position. Bill, looking over into the water thoughtfully, asked if there were many sharks in those waters. I replied that I had never seen but one, inquiring why he asked. "Why," said he, "I think I could get some grub over to those women, if you could manage the *guardiano*." "It isn't much of a swim," I replied, "but as to carrying the prog, you will find that more difficult." "Well," said he, "I have carried a pretty good load in the water before now, and can float enough to keep those women from starving. I lived in the Sandwich Islands once, and though I don't stand out of the water like a Kanaka, I have carried my clothes on my head many a mile without wetting them, and a few pounds of bread won't sink me." Here his eye twinkled as if he had a story to tell, and I waited for it. "I commanded a lorch transport during the last war in China," he began, after a moment, "and one day, while we were in Canton, I was walking through one of the streets with my mate, an Englishman, and we stopped to look in a joss-house. There was a joss there of pure silver, about fourteen inches high, and I made up my mind to have him. We two were the only Europeans on board, and the first dark stormy night we took the boat and went ashore well armed. The joss-house had no guard but the priests, and the night was so bad that we broke the door down and got in without the outsiders knowing it, and carried the joss off easily enough; but the next day we had row enough to pay for it. Every vessel in the river was searched, and if I had had him on board, he would have been found, and we should have caught it, for the officers were in earnest about it, and the Chinese in a fury. I knew there would be the d—l to pay in the morning, so I put a cord around his neck, and went down and hung him to the lower pintle of the rudder, and left him there till the hue-and-cry was over, and then brought it up. It weighed forty-two pounds. I think I could do more in this case than then." "Do it then," said I; "I'll help you all I can: but we won't let the captain or any of the men know of it!" "Oh, I'll put that

all right," said Aleck; "Jones has the first watch to-night, and I'll change with him, and as for the *guardiano*, he's a sleepy cuss, and I reckon won't give himself the trouble to look on deck after he turns in—he never has, any way; and if you'd like to keep watch with me, sir, I think we can manage it." "But, Bill," I added, "look out for the *guarda-costa*: if they see anything in the water moving between the vessels, they'll fire at it, certainly." "That won't trouble me," replied the imperturbable tar. "I have run the blockade in the American war thirteen times, and had bigger balls than that fellow can throw, whizzing about my head, and fired by better gunners than they have got aboard there. Why, sir, we ran almost into one of their Monitors one night, and had eight 15-inch shot fired at us without being hit, and in all the thirteen trips in and out, we never were hit but once—and then the ball only took off the head of the look-out forward."

And so we arranged it that Bill should swim off to the ship as soon as it was dark, and trusting to fortune to get the provisions aboard without discovery, we were to hang overboard a light for him to swim back to.

"That ship reminds me," said Bill, after a long pause, "of a trip I made once in an English ship to Senegal. We went up the river to load, and while we lay there waiting for cargo to come down, we had one of the worst yellow fevers break out on the ship I ever saw. The first man who was taken with it died in three hours, and that day two more were taken and died before dark, and in three days we lost all but seven of the crew one after the other—not one was sick more than six hours—and then the mate was taken sick. The first thing I knew of it was that he said to me, 'Bill, give me a good glass of grog, and fill my pipe; I want one good smoke and a drink before I die.' 'Oh, nonsense,' says I, 'you are no more likely to die than I am.' 'I know very well I have got it,' said he; 'and when I am dead bury me deep enough so that the land crabs can't dig me up.' Sure enough he died that afternoon, and we took him ashore before night and buried him in a good deep grave. In two days more there were only the captain and I alive on the ship. And there we lay ten days till we heard that an English man-of-war was off the mouth of the river, and the captain sent a native boat down to ask him to send up men to work the ship out of the river. The man-of-war sent word that they wouldn't send men up the river, but if we could work her down with natives, they would give us men to get the ship home to England, and so we got out, but a deuce of a time we had of it getting down. I suppose they feel on that ship pretty much as I did those ten days."

All day long we heard at intervals that pitiful cry, "Bread! Bread!" faintly coming over the water. It was more tolerable than the day before, because we knew that relief would go with nightfall. And so, as the dark came, we made up a packet of hard bread with a little cold meat and a bottle of wine, and binding it securely between Bill's shoulders, and with a pointed stick on top of it, in case, as he said, "a shark should want to take the prog from him," he slipped down into the water, stripped

to his drawers, and struck out for the Cholera-ship so quietly that you might have thought it a little school of guard-fish.

We sat on the forecastle watching and waiting. I said nothing, and where two are together and one will not talk, the other sometimes will. Aleck finally broke silence with—"Women are mighty curious things. I'll bet that old one don't touch a mouthful till t'other has eaten, and I don't believe she would have made half the fuss she did if she had been alone. In the beginning of the American war I belonged to a regiment of mounted riflemen, and we were sent into Eastern Tennessee, where there was a good deal of bush-whacking about that time. We were picketed one day in a line about two miles long across country, and I was on the extreme left. I took my saddle off, holsters and all, and hung it on a branch of a peach-tree, and my carbine on another. We knew there were no Yankees near, and so I was kind o' off guard, eating peaches. By-and-by I saw a young woman coming down to where I was, on horseback. She wanted to know if there were many of the boys near, and if they would buy some milk of her if she took it down to them. I said I thought they would, and took about a quart myself; and as she hadn't much more, I emptied the water out of my canteen and took the rest. Says she, 'If you'll come up to the house yonder, I've got something better than that: you may have some good peach brandy—some of your fellows might like a little.' I said I'd go, and she says, 'You needn't take your saddle or carbine, it's just a step, and they are safe enough here—there's nobody about.' So I mounted bare-back, and she led the way. When we passed the bars where she came in, she says, 'You ride on a step, and I'll get down and put up the bars.' I went on, and as she came up behind, she says pretty sharp, 'Ride a little faster, if you please.' I looked round and she had a revolver pointed straight at my head, and I saw that she knew how to use it. I had left everything behind me like a fool, and had to give in and obey orders. 'That's the house, if you please,' she says, and showed me a house in the edge of the woods a quarter of a mile away. We got there, and she told me to get down and eat something, for she was going to give me a long ride—into the Yankee lines, about twenty miles away. Her father came out and abused me like a thief, and told me that he was going to have me sent into the Federal lines to be hung. It seems he had had a son hung the week before by some of the Confederates, and was going to have his revenge out of me. I ate pretty well, for I thought I might need it before I got any more, and then the old fellow began to curse me and abuse me like anything. He said he would shoot me on the spot if it wasn't that he'd rather have me hung; and instead of giving me my own horse, he took the worst one he had in his stables, and they put me on that with my feet tied together under his belly. Luckily they didn't tie my hands, for they thought I had no arms, and couldn't help myself; but I always carried a small revolver in my shirt bosom. The girl kept too sharp watch on me for me to use it. She never turned her revolver from me, and I knew that the first suspicious move I made I was a dead man. We went

about ten miles in this way, when my old crow-bait gave out and wouldn't go any further. She wouldn't trust me afoot, and so had to give up her own horse, but she kept the bridle in her own hands, and walked ahead with one eye turned back on me, and the revolver cocked with her finger on the trigger, so that I never had a chance to put my hand in my bosom. We finally came to a spring, and she asked me if I wanted to drink : I didn't feel much like drinking, but I said yes, and so she let me down. I put my head down to the water, and at the same time put my hand down where the revolver was, and pulled it forward where I could put my hand on it easily ; but she was on the watch and I couldn't pull it out. I mounted again, and the first time she was off her guard a little, I fired and broke the arm she held the pistol in. 'Now,' says I, 'it's my turn : you'll please get on that horse and we'll go back. She didn't flinch or say a word, but got on the horse, and I tied her legs as they had mine, and we went back to the house. The old man he heard us come up to the door and looked out of the window. He turned as pale as a sheet and ran for his rifle. I knew what he was after, and pushed the door in before he was loaded. Says I, 'You may put that shooting-iron down and come with me.' He wasn't as brave as the girl, but it was no use to resist, and he knew it ; so he came along. About half-way back we met some of our fellows who had missed me, and come out to look me up. They took them both, and ——," he paused a moment, and lowering his tone, added, "I don't know what they did with them, but I know d—— well what they would have done with me." I replied after a pause, "I suppose they hanged them both?" Aleck nodded his head without looking up, and seemed anxious to drop the subject.

"But," said I, rather disposed to work the vein of communicativeness, but not anxious to hear any more *such* adventures, "I thought you had been in the Confederate navy?" "I was," said Aleck. "I was with Semmes everywhere he went; I was in the naval brigade and blockade-running, and on the *Alabama* all the while he commanded her." "But not when she sank, I suppose?" I rejoined. "Well, I was, and was picked up with him by the *Deerhound*." "It was a pretty sharp fight, wasn't it," I suggestingly asked. "It was that," replied Aleck, but he didn't care about enlarging. "I suppose it was the eleven-inch shells that did her business?" "Oh, no," said he, coming to a kind of confessional, "we never had any chance; we had no gunners to compare with the *Kearsage's*. Our gunners fired by routine, and when they had the gun loaded, fired it off blind. They never changed the elevation of their guns all the fight, and the *Kearsage* was working up to us all the while, taking advantage of every time she was hid by smoke to work a little nearer, and then her gunners took aim for every shot." "Then it isn't true that the *Alabama* tried to board the *Kearsage*?" "No, sir; she did her best to get away from her from the time the fight commenced : we knew well that if we got in range of her Dahlgren howitzers she would sink us in ten minutes." "But," I asked, "don't you believe that Semmes

supposed he would whip the *Kearsage* when he went out to fight her?" "No: he was bullied into it, and took good care to leave all his valuables on shore, and had a life-preserver on through the fight. I saw him put it on, and I thought if it was wise in him it wouldn't be foolish in me, and I put one on too. When Semmes saw that the ship was going down, he told us all to swim who could, and was one of the first to jump into the water, and we all made for the *Deerhound*. I was a long way ahead of Semmes, and when I came up to the *Deerhound's* boat they asked me if I was Semmes before they would take me in. I said I wasn't, and then they asked me what I was on the *Alabama*. Said I, 'No matter what I was on the *Alabama*, I shall be a dead man soon if you don't take me in.' They asked me again if I was an officer or a seaman, and wouldn't take me in until I told them that I was an officer." "But," said I, "did they actually refuse to pick up common seamen, and leave them to drown?" "They did that," replied he wrathfully, and probably not very correctly; "and as soon as they had Semmes on board they made tracks as fast as they knew how, and left everybody else to drown or be picked up by the *Kearsage*."

"Time to show the light, I reckon," said Aleck, after his ebullition had subsided, and proceeded to put over the bows the light agreed on. An hour after Bill had started on his voyage we heard his whistle from below the forechains, and heaving him a line brought him in cautiously. He slipped down to change his clothing and add to it, and then came up to render an account of his doings. He had, as he anticipated, found more difficulty in getting on board the ship than in getting to it. He had found the poor women on the quarter-deck—all order and shipkeeping abandoned, and no look-out anywhere. The passengers were sleeping on deck or sitting around it, moaning and weeping. He dared not call to the women for fear of disturbing the *guardiani*, and of attracting the attention of the other passengers to whom his small supply would have been but a mouthful. He swam round and round looking for a loose rope's-end in vain, and finally did what we should have supposed certain to lead to his discovery—climbed up the cable and over the bows, throwing over his shoulders the first garment he found on the disorderly deck, and slowly walked the whole length of the ship: when, having deposited the provisions at the side of the unfortunate ones, signifying that they were to inform no one and keep them to themselves, as well as his few words of Greek would let him, he dropped overboard by a line from the quarter, and leaving them in mute and motionless wonder, came back as quietly as he had gone. Bill couldn't resist the temptation next morning of waving a big white cloth at the ship, a signal which attracted the immediate attention and suspicion of our watchful *guardiano*, who, with an effervescence of useless Greek, delivered his mind on the subject of *contumacia* and communication, at which we all laughed: we felt merrier that morning than for many days past.

In fact, though we saw for several days more the boat going back and

forwards from the ship to the shore, and knew that they went to bury the dead, could see them buried even with our glasses, we never felt so oppressed by the horror of it since Bill's chivalric swim. We finished without other incident our appointed two weeks, and had soon the satisfaction of knowing that public clamour had obliged Syra to recognize the claims of humanity, and send food to the starving.

We had to undergo a five days' "observation" behind the lighthouse island off the port, in company with the English steamer, which was, moreover, threatened with a third fortnight; which she escaped only by the energetic remonstrances of the British consul, backed up by the Legation at Athens, who persuaded the central government to send orders to Syra that the steamer should be admitted to pratique. A Greek man-of-war was accordingly sent from the Piræus to Syra with a commission to ascertain the truth of the complaints of Mr. Lloyd, and finding them well-founded, ordered the admittance of the steamer to pratique; but so great was the terror of the population and the timidity of the commission, that the latter ceded to the threats of a revolution, and compromised on admitting the passengers to the lazaretto of Syra and sending the ship away. If all these things are not recorded in the chronicles of that city, they are in the minds of many who were martyrs to the inhuman cowardice of Syra, and who will bear me testimony that every occurrence of which public recognition could be taken in the above narrative is strictly true. As for the yarns, I tell them, as nearly as I can remember, as they were told me, and—believe them.

Armadale.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

CHAPTER XIV.

MISS GWILT'S DIARY.



I.L. Saints' Terrace, New Road, London, July 28th, Monday night.—I can hardly hold my head up, I am so tired. But, in my situation, I dare not trust anything to memory. Before I go to bed, I must write my customary record of the events of the day.

“So far, the turn of luck in my favour (it was long enough before it took the turn!) seems likely to continue. I succeeded in forcing Armadale—the brute required nothing short of forcing!—to leave Thorpe-Ambrose for London, alone in the same carriage with me, before all the people in the station. There was a full attendance of dealers in small scandal, all staring hard at us, and all evidently drawing their own

conclusions. Either I knew nothing of Thorpe-Ambrose—or the town-gossip is busy enough by this time with Mr. Armadale and Miss Gwilt.

I had some difficulty with him for the first half-hour after we left the station. The guard (delightful man! I felt so grateful to him!) had shut us up together in expectation of half-a-crown at the end of the journey. Armadale was suspicious of me, and he showed it plainly. Little by little I tamed my wild beast—partly by taking care to display no curiosity about his journey to town, and partly by interesting him on the subject of his friend Midwinter; dwelling especially on the opportunity that now offered itself for a reconciliation between them. I kept harping on this string till I set his tongue going, and made him amuse me as a gentleman is bound



THE END OF THE ELOPEMENT.

to do when he has the honour of escorting a lady on a long railway journey.

"What little mind he has was full, of course, of his own affairs and Miss Milroy's. No words can express the clumsiness he showed in trying to talk about himself, without taking me into his confidence or mentioning Miss Milroy's name. He was going to London, he gravely informed me, on a matter of indescribable interest to him. It was a secret for the present, but he hoped to tell it me soon; it had made a great difference already in the way in which he looked at the slanders spoken of him in Thorpe-Ambrose; he was too happy to care what the scandal-mongers said of him now, and he should soon stop their mouths by appearing in a new character that would surprise them all. So he blundered on, with the firm persuasion that he was keeping me quite in the dark. It was hard not to laugh, when I thought of my anonymous letter on its way to the major; but I managed to control myself—though, I must own, with some difficulty. As the time wore on, I began to feel a terrible excitement: the position was, I think, a little too much for me. There I was, alone with him, talking in the most innocent, easy, familiar manner, and having it in my mind all the time, to brush his life out of my way, when the moment comes, as I might brush a stain off my gown. It made my blood leap, and my cheeks flush. I caught myself laughing once or twice much louder than I ought—and long before we got to London I thought it desirable to put my face in hiding by pulling down my veil.

"There was no difficulty, on reaching the terminus, in getting him to come in the cab with me to the hotel where Midwinter is staying. He was all eagerness to be reconciled with his dear friend—principally, I have no doubt, because he wants the dear friend to lend a helping hand to the elopement. The real difficulty lay, of course, with Midwinter. My sudden journey to London had allowed me no opportunity of writing to combat his superstitious conviction that he and his former friend are better apart. I thought it wise to leave Armadale in the cab at the door, and to go into the hotel by myself to pave the way for him.

Fortunately, Midwinter had not gone out. His delight at seeing me some days sooner than he had hoped, had something infectious in it, I suppose. Pooh! I may own the truth to my own diary! There was a moment when I forgot everything in the world but our two selves as completely as he did. I felt as if I was back in my 'teens—until I remembered the lout in the cab at the door. And then I was five-and-thirty again in an instant.

"His face altered when he heard who was below, and what it was I wanted of him—he looked, not angry but distressed. He yielded, however, before long, not to my reasons, for I gave him none, but to my entreaties. His old fondness for his friend might possibly have had some share in persuading him against his will—but my own opinion is that he acted entirely under the influence of his fondness for Me. *

I waited in the sitting-room while he went down to the door; so I

knew nothing of what passed between them when they first saw each other again. But, oh, the difference between the two men when the interval had passed, and they came upstairs together and joined me. They were both agitated, but in such different ways ! The hateful Armadale, so loud and red and clumsy ; the dear, loveable Midwinter, so pale and quiet, with such a gentleness in his voice when he spoke, and such tenderness in his eyes every time they turned my way. Armadale overlooked me as completely as if I had not been in the room. *He* referred to me over and over again in the conversation ; *he* constantly looked at me to see what I thought, while I sat in my corner silently watching them ; *he* wanted to go with me and see me safe to my lodgings, and spare me all trouble with the cabman and the luggage. When I thanked him and declined, Armadale looked unaffectedly relieved at the prospect of seeing my back turned, and of having his friend all to himself. I left him, with his awkward elbows half over the table, scrawling a letter (no doubt to Miss Milroy), and shouting to the waiter that he wanted a bed at the hotel. I had calculated on his staying as a matter of course where he found his friend staying. It was pleasant to find my anticipations realized, and to know that I have as good as got him now under my own eye. "

" After promising to let Midwinter know where he could see me to-morrow, I went away in the cab to hunt for lodgings by myself.

" With some difficulty I have succeeded in getting an endurable sitting-room and bedroom in this house, where the people are perfect strangers to me. Having paid a week's rent in advance (for I naturally preferred dispensing with a reference), I find myself with exactly three shillings and ninepence left in my purse. It is impossible to ask Midwinter for money, after he has already paid Mrs. Oldershaw's note of hand. I must borrow something to-morrow on my watch and chain at the pawnbroker's. Enough to keep me going for a fortnight is all, and more than all, that I want. In that time, or in less than that time, Midwinter will have married me.

" *July 29th. Two o'clock.*—Early in the morning I sent a line to Midwinter, telling him that he would find me here at three this afternoon. That done, I devoted the morning to two errands of my own. One is hardly worth mentioning—it was only to raise money on my watch and chain. I got more than I expected ; and more (even supposing I buy myself one or two little things in the way of cheap summer dress) than I am at all likely to spend before the wedding-day.

" The other errand was of a far more serious kind. It led me into an attorney's office.

" I was well aware last night (though I was too weary to put it down in my diary), that I could not possibly see Midwinter this morning—in the position he now occupies towards me—without at least *appearing* to take him into my confidence, on the subject of myself and my circumstances. Excepting one necessary consideration which I must be careful not to overlook, there is not the least difficulty in my drawing on my

invention, and telling him any story I please—for thus far I have told no story to anybody. Midwinter went away to London before it was possible to approach the subject. As to the Milroys (having provided them with the customary reference), I could fortunately keep them at arm's length on all questions relating purely to myself. And lastly, when I effected my reconciliation with Armadale on the drive in front of the house, he was fool enough to be too generous to let me defend my character. When I had expressed my regret for having lost my temper and threatened Miss Milroy, and when I had accepted his assurance that my pupil had never done or meant to do me any injury, he was too magnanimous to hear a word on the subject of my private affairs. Thus, I am quite unfettered by any former assertions of my own; and I may tell any story I please—with the one drawback hinted at already in the shape of a restraint. Whatever I may invent in the way of pure fiction, I must preserve the character in which I have appeared at Thorpe-Ambrose—for, with the notoriety that is attached to *my other name*, I have no other choice but to marry Midwinter in my maiden name as 'Miss Gwilt.'

"This was the consideration that took me into the lawyer's office. I felt that I must inform myself, before I saw Midwinter later in the day, of any awkward consequences that may follow the marriage of a widow, if she conceals her widow's name. '

"Knowing of no other professional person whom I could trust, I went boldly to the lawyer who had my interests in his charge, at that terrible past time in my life, which I have more reason than ever to shrink from thinking of now. He was astonished, and, as I could plainly detect, by no means pleased to see me. I had hardly opened my lips, before he said he hoped I was not consulting him *again* (with a strong emphasis on the word) on my own account. I took the hint, and put the question I had come to ask, in the interests of that accommodating personage on such occasions—an absent friend. The lawyer evidently saw through it at once; but he was sharp enough to turn my 'friend' to good account on his side. He said he would answer the question as a matter of courtesy towards a lady represented by myself; but he must make it a condition that this consultation of him by deputy should go no further.

"I accepted his terms—for I really respected the clever manner in which he contrived to keep me at arm's length without violating the laws of good breeding. In two minutes I heard what he had to say, mastered it in my own mind, and went out.

"Short as it was, the consultation told me everything I wanted to know. I risk nothing by marrying Midwinter in my maiden instead of my widow's name. The marriage is a good marriage in this way:—that it can only be set aside if my husband finds out the imposture, and takes proceedings to invalidate our marriage in my lifetime. That is the lawyer's answer in the lawyer's own words. It relieves me at once—in this direction at any rate—of all apprehension about the future. 'The

only imposture my husband will ever discover—and then only if he happens to be on the spot—is the imposture that puts me in the place, and gives me the income, of Armadale's widow; and, by that time, I shall have invalidated my own marriage for ever.

"Half-past two! Midwinter will be here in half an hour. I must go and ask my glass how I look. I must rouse my invention, and make up my little domestic romance. Am I feeling nervous about it? Something flutters in the place where my heart used to be. At five and thirty, too! and after such a life as mine!

Six o'clock.—He has just gone. The day for our marriage is a day determined on already.

"I have tried to rest, and recover myself. I can't rest. I have come back to these leaves. There is much to be written in them since Midwinter has been here, that concerns me nearly.

"Let me begin with what I hate most to remember, and so be the sooner done with it—let me begin with the paltry string of falsehoods I told him about my family troubles.

"What *can* be the secret of this man's hold on me? How is it that he alters me so that I hardly know myself again? I was like myself in the railway carriage yesterday with Armadale. It was surely frightful to be talking to the living man, through the whole of that long journey, with the knowledge in me all the while that I meant to be his widow—and yet I was only excited and fevered. Hour after hour I never shrunk once from speaking to Armadale—but the first trumpery falsehood I told Midwinter, turned me cold when I saw that he believed it! I felt a dreadful hysterical choking in the throat when he entreated me not to reveal my troubles. And once—I am horrified when I think of it—once, when he said, 'If I *could* love you more dearly, I should love you more dearly, now,' I was within a hair's breadth of turning traitor to myself. I was on the very point of crying out to him, 'Lies! all lies! I'm a fiend in human shape! Marry the wretchedest creature that prowls the streets, and you will marry a better woman than me!' Yes! the seeing his eyes moisten, the hearing his voice tremble while I was deceiving him, shook me in that way. I have seen handsomer men by hundreds, cleverer men by hundreds. What can this man have roused in me? Is it Love? I thought I *had* loved, never to love again. Does a woman not love, when the man's hardness to her drives her to drown herself? A man drove *me* to that last despair in days gone by. Did all my misery at that time come from something which was not Love? Have I lived to be five and thirty, and am I only feeling, now, what Love really is?—now, when it is too late? Ridiculous! Besides, what is the use of asking? What do I know about it? What does any woman ever know? The more we think of it, the more we deceive ourselves. I wish I had been born an animal. My beauty might have been of some use to me then—it might have got me a good master.

"Here is a whole page of my diary filled ; and nothing written yet that is of the slightest use to me ! My miserable made-up story must be told over again here, while the incidents are fresh in my memory—or how am I to refer to it consistently on after-occasions when I may be obliged to speak of it again ?

"There was nothing new in what I told him : it was the commonplace rubbish of the circulating libraries. A dead father ; a lost fortune ; vagabond brothers, whom I dread ever seeing again ; a bedridden mother dependent on my exertions—No ! I can't write it down ! I hate myself, I despise myself, when I remember that *he* believed it because I said it—that *he* was distressed by it, because it was my story ! I will face the chances of contradicting myself—I will risk discovery and ruin—anything rather than dwell on that contemptible deception of him a moment longer.

"My lies came to an end at last. And then he talked to me of himself, and of his prospects. Oh, what a relief it was to turn to that, at the time ! What a relief it is to come to it now !

"He has accepted the offer about which he wrote to me at Thorpe-Ambrose ; and he is now engaged as occasional foreign correspondent to the new newspaper. His first destination is Naples. I wish it had been some other place, for I have certain past associations with Naples which I am not at all anxious to renew. It has been arranged that he is to leave England not later than the eleventh of next month. By that time, therefore, I, who am to go with him, must go with him as his wife.

"There is not the slightest difficulty about the marriage. All this part of it is so easy, that I begin to dread an accident. The proposal to keep the thing strictly private—which it might have embarrassed me to make—comes from him. Marrying me in his own name—the name that he has kept concealed from every living creature but myself and Mr. Brock—it is his interest that not a soul who knows him should be present at the ceremony ; his friend Armadale least of all. He has been a week in London already. When another week has passed, he proposes to get the Licence, and to be married in the church belonging to the parish in which the hotel is situated. These are the only necessary formalities. I had but to say 'Yes' (he told me), and to feel no further anxiety about the future. I said 'Yes,' with such a devouring anxiety about the future, that I was afraid he would see it. What minutes the next few minutes were, when he whispered delicious words to me, while I hid my face on his breast !

"I recovered myself first, and led him back to the subject of Armadale ; having my own reasons for wanting to know what they said to each other, after I had left them yesterday.

"The manner in which Midwinter replied, showed me that he was speaking under the restraint of respecting a confidence placed in him by his friend. Long before he had done, I detected what the confidence was. Armadale had been consulting him (exactly as I anticipated) on the subject of the elopement. Although he appears to have remonstrated

against taking the girl secretly away from her home, Midwinter seems to have felt some delicacy about speaking strongly ; remembering (widely different as the circumstances are) that he was contemplating a private marriage himself. I gathered, at any rate, that he had produced very little effect by what he had said ; and that Armadale had already carried out his absurd intention of consulting the head-clerk in the office of his London lawyers.

"Having got as far as this, Midwinter put the question which I felt must come sooner or later. He asked if I objected to our engagement being mentioned in the strictest secrecy to his friend.

" 'I will answer,' he said, 'for Allan's respecting any confidence that I place in him. And I will undertake, when the time comes, so to use my influence over him as to prevent his being present at the marriage, and discovering (what he must never know) that my name is the same as his own. It would help me,' he went on, 'to speak more strongly about the object that has brought him to London, if I can requite the frankness with which he has spoken of his private affairs to me, by the same frankness on my side.'

"I had no choice but to give the necessary permission, and I gave it. It is of the utmost importance to me to know what course Major Milroy takes with his daughter and Armadale, after receiving my anonymous letter ; and, unless I invite Armadale's confidence in some way, I am nearly certain to be kept in the dark. Let him once be trusted with the knowledge that I am to be Midwinter's wife ; and what he tells his friend about his love-affair, he will tell me.

"When it had been understood between us that Armadale was to be taken into our confidence, we began to talk about ourselves again. How the time flew ! What a sweet enchantment it was to forget everything in his arms ! How he loves me !—ah, poor fellow, how he loves me !

"I have promised to meet him to-morrow morning in the Regent's Park. The less he is seen here the better. The people in this house are strangers to me certainly—but it may be wise to consult appearances, as if I was still at Thorpe-Ambrose, and not to produce the impression, even on their minds, that Midwinter is engaged to me. If any after-inquiries are made, when I have run my grand risk, the testimony of my London landlady might be testimony worth having.

"That wretched old Bashwood ! Writing of Thorpe-Ambrose reminds me of him. What will he say when the town-gossip tells him that Armadale has taken me to London, in a carriage reserved for ourselves ? It really is too absurd in a man of Bashwood's age and appearance to presume to be in love !

"*July 30th.* News at last ! Armadale has heard from Miss Milroy. My anonymous letter has produced its effect. The girl is removed from Thorpe-Ambrose already ; and the whole project of the elopement is blown to the winds at once and for ever. This was the substance of

what Midwinter had to tell me, when I met him in the Park. I affected to be excessively astonished, and to feel the necessary feminine longing to know all the particulars. 'Not that I expect to have my curiosity satisfied,' I added, 'for Mr. Armadale and I are little better than mere acquaintances, after all.'

"'You are far more than a mere acquaintance in Allan's eyes,' said Midwinter. 'Having your permission to trust him, I have already told him how near and dear you are to me.'

"Hearing this, I thought it desirable, before I put any questions about Miss Milroy, to attend to my own interests first, and to find out what effect the announcement of my coming marriage had produced on Armadale. It was possible that he might be still suspicious of me, and that the inquiries he made in London, at Mrs. Milroy's instigation, might be still hanging on his mind.

"'Did Mr. Armadale seem surprised,' I asked, 'when you told him of our engagement, and when you said it was to be kept a secret from everybody?'

"'He seemed greatly surprised,' said Midwinter, 'to hear that we were going to be married. All he said when I told him it must be kept a secret was, that he supposed there were family reasons on your side for making the marriage a private one.'

"'What did you say,' I inquired, 'when he made that remark?'

"'I said the family reasons were on my side,' answered Midwinter. 'And I thought it right to add—considering that Allan had allowed himself to be misled by the ignorant distrust of you at Thorpe-Ambrose—that you had confided to me the whole of your sad family story, and that you had amply justified your unwillingness, under any ordinary circumstances, to speak of your private affairs.'

"(I breathed freely again. He had said just what was wanted, just in the right way.)

"'Thank you,' I said, 'for putting me right in your friend's estimation. Does he wish to see me?' I added, by way of getting back to the other subject of Miss Milroy and the elopement.

"'He is longing to see you,' returned Midwinter. 'He is in great distress, poor fellow—distress which I have done my best to soothe, but which I believe would yield far more readily to a woman's sympathy than to mine.'

"'Where is he now?' I asked.

"'He was at the hotel; and to the hotel I instantly proposed that we should go. It is a busy, crowded place; and (with my veil down) I have less fear of compromising myself there than at my quiet lodgings. Besides, it is vitally important to me to know what Armadale does next, under this total change of circumstances,—for I must so control his proceedings as to get him away from England if I can. We took a cab: such was my eagerness to sympathize with the heart-broken lover, that we took a cab!

"Anything so ridiculous as Armadale's behaviour under the double shock of discovering that his young lady has been taken away from him, and that I am to be married to Midwinter, I never before witnessed in all my experience. To say that he was like a child is a libel on all children who are not born idiots. He congratulated me on my coming marriage, and execrated the unknown wretch who had written the anonymous letter, little thinking that he was speaking of one and the same person in one and the same breath. Now he submissively acknowledged that Major Milroy had his rights as a father, and now he reviled the major as having no feeling for anything but his mechanics and his clock. At one moment he started up, with the tears in his eyes, and declared that his 'darling Neelie' was an angel on earth. At another he sat down sulkily, and thought that a girl of her spirit might have run away on the spot and joined him in London. After a good half-hour of this absurd exhibition, I succeeded in quieting him; and then a few words of tender inquiry produced what I had expressly come to the hotel to see—Miss Milroy's letter.

"It was outrageously long and rambling and confused—in short, the letter of a fool. I had to wade through plenty of vulgar sentiment and lamentation, and to lose time and patience over maudlin outbursts of affection, and nauseous kisses enclosed in circles of ink. However, I contrived to extract the information I wanted at last; and here it is:—

"The major, on receipt of my anonymous warning, appears to have sent at once for his daughter, and to have shown her the letter. 'You know what a hard life I lead with your mother; don't make it harder still, Neelie, by deceiving me.' That was all the poor old gentleman said. I always did like the major; and, though he was afraid to show it, I know he always liked me. His appeal to his daughter (if *her* account of it is to be believed) cut her to the heart. She burst out crying (let her alone for crying at the right moment!), and confessed everything.

"After giving her time to recover herself (if he had given her a good box on the ears it would have been more to the purpose!) the major seems to have put certain questions, and to have become convinced (as I was convinced myself) that his daughter's heart, or fancy, or whatever she calls it, was really and truly set on Armadale. The discovery evidently distressed as well as surprised him. He appears to have hesitated, and to have maintained his own unfavourable opinion of Miss Neelie's lover for some little time. But his daughter's tears and entreaties (so like the weakness of the dear old gentleman!) shook him at last. Though he firmly refused to allow of any marriage engagement at present, he consented to overlook the clandestine meetings in the park, and to put Armadale's fitness to become his son-in-law to the test, on certain conditions.

"These conditions are, that for the next six months to come, all communication is to be broken off, both personally and by writing, between Armadale and Miss Milroy. That space of time is to be occupied by the young gentleman as he himself thinks best, and by the young lady

in completing her education at school. If, when the six months have passed, they are both still of the same mind, and if Armadale's conduct in the interval has been such as to improve the major's opinion of him, he will be allowed to present himself in the character of Miss Milroy's suitor—and, in six months more, if all goes well, the marriage may take place.

"I declare I could kiss the dear old major, if I was only within reach of him! If I had been at his elbow, and had dictated the conditions myself, I could have asked for nothing better than this. Six months of total separation between Armadale and Miss Milroy! In half that time—with all communication cut off between the two—it must go hard with me indeed if I don't find myself dressed in the necessary mourning, and publicly recognized as Armadale's widow.

"But I am forgetting the girl's letter. She gives her father's reasons for making his conditions, in her father's own words. The major seems to have spoken so sensibly and so feelingly that he left his daughter no decent alternative—and he leaves Armadale no decent alternative—but to submit. As well as I can remember it, he seems to have expressed himself to Miss Neelie in these, or nearly in these terms:—

"Don't think I am behaving cruelly to you, my dear—I am merely asking you to put Mr. Armadale to the proof. It is not only right, it is absolutely necessary, that you should hold no communication with him for some time to come; and I will show you why. In the first place, if you go to school, the necessary rules in such places—necessary for the sake of the other girls—would not permit you to see Mr. Armadale, or to receive letters from him; and, if you are to become mistress of Thorpe-Ambrose, to school you must go, for you would be ashamed, and I should be ashamed, if you occupied the position of a lady of station, without having the accomplishments which all ladies of station are expected to possess. In the second place, I want to see whether Mr. Armadale will continue to think of you as he thinks now, without being encouraged in his attachment by seeing you, or reminded of it by hearing from you. If I am wrong in thinking him flighty and unreliable; and if your opinion of him is the right one, this is not putting the young man to an unfair test—true love survives much longer separations than a separation of six months. And when that time is over, and well over; and when I have had him under my own eye for another six months, and have learnt to think as highly of him as you do—even then, my dear, after all that terrible delay, you will still be a married woman before you are eighteen. Think of this, Neelie; and show that you love me and trust me, by accepting my proposal. I will hold no communication with Mr. Armadale myself. I will leave it to you to write and tell him what has been decided on. He may write back one letter, and one only, to acquaint you with his decision. After that, for the sake of your reputation, nothing more is to be said, and nothing more is to be done, and the matter is to be kept strictly private until the six months' interval is at an end."

"To this effect the major spoke. His behaviour to that little slut of a girl has produced a stronger impression on me than anything else in the letter. It has set me thinking (me, of all the people in the world!) of what they call 'a moral difficulty.' We are perpetually told that there can be no possible connection between virtue and vice. Can there not? Here is Major Milroy doing exactly what an excellent father, at once kind and prudent, affectionate and firm, would do under the circumstances—and by that very course of conduct, he has now smoothed the way for me, as completely as if he had been the chosen accomplice of that abominable creature, Miss Gwilt. Only think of my reasoning in this way! But I am in such good spirits, I can do anything to-day. I have not looked so bright and so young as I look now, for months past!

"To return to the letter, for the last time—it is so excessively dull and stupid that I really can't help wandering away from it into reflections of my own, as a mere relief.

"After solemnly announcing that she meant to sacrifice herself to her beloved father's wishes (the brazen assurance of her setting up for a martyr after what has happened, exceeds anything I ever heard or read of!), Miss Neelie next mentioned that the major proposed taking her to the seaside for change of air, during the few days that were still to elapse before she went to school. Armadale was to send his answer by return of post, and to address her, under cover to her father, at Lowestoft. With this, and with a last outburst of tender protestation, crammed crookedly into a corner of the page, the letter ended. (N.B.—The major's object in taking her to the seaside is plain enough. He still privately distrusts Armadale, and he is wisely determined to prevent any more clandestine meetings in the park, before the girl is safely disposed of at school.)

"When I had done with the letter—I had requested permission to read parts of it which I particularly admired, for the second and third time!—we all consulted together in a friendly way about what Armadale was to do.

"He was fool enough, at the outset, to protest against submitting to Major Milroy's conditions. He declared, with his odious red face looking the picture of brute health, that he should never survive a six months' separation from his beloved Neelie. Midwinter (as may easily be imagined) seemed a little ashamed of him, and joined me in bringing him to his senses. We showed him what would have been plain enough to anybody but a booby, that there was no honourable, or even decent, alternative left but to follow the example of submission set by the young lady. 'Wait—and you will have her for your wife,' was what I said. 'Wait—and you will force the major to alter his unjust opinion of you,' was what Midwinter added. With two clever people hammering common sense into his head at that rate, it is needless to say that his head gave way, and he submitted.

"Having decided him to accept the major's conditions (I was careful

to warn him, before he wrote to Miss Milroy, that my engagement to Midwinter was to be kept as strictly secret from her as from everybody else), the next question we had to settle related to his future proceedings. I was ready with the necessary arguments to stop him, if he had proposed returning to Thorpe-Ambrose. But he proposed nothing of the sort. On the contrary, he declared, of his own accord, that nothing would induce him to go back. The place and the people were associated with everything that was hateful to him. There would be no Miss Milroy now to meet him in the park, and no Midwinter to keep him company in the solitary house. 'I'd rather break stones on the road,' was the sensible and cheerful way in which he put it, 'than go back to Thorpe-Ambrose.'

"The first suggestion after this came from Midwinter. The sly old clergyman who gave Mrs. Oldershaw and me so much trouble, has it seems been ill; but has been latterly reported better. 'Why not go to Somersetshire,' said Midwinter; 'and see your good friend, and my good friend, Mr. Brock?'

"Armada caught at the proposal readily enough. He longed, in the first place, to see 'dear old Brock,' and he longed, in the second place, to see his yacht. After staying a few days more in London with Midwinter, he would gladly go to Somersetshire. But what after that?

"Seeing my opportunity, I came to the rescue this time. 'You have got a yacht, Mr. Armadale,' I said; 'and you know that Midwinter is going to Italy. When you are tired of Somersetshire, why not make a voyage to the Mediterranean, and meet your friend, and your friend's wife, at Naples?'

"I made the allusion to 'his friend's wife,' with the most becoming modesty and confusion. Armadale was enchanted. I had hit on the best of all ways of occupying the weary time. He started up, and wrung my hand in quite an ecstasy of gratitude. How I do hate people who can only express their feelings by hurting other people's hands!

"Midwinter was as pleased with my proposal as Armadale; but he saw difficulties in the way of carrying it out. He considered the yacht too small for a cruise to the Mediterranean, and he thought it desirable to hire a larger vessel. His friend thought otherwise. I left them arguing the question. It was quite enough for me to have made sure, in the first place, that Armadale will not return to Thorpe-Ambrose; and to have decided him, in the second place, on going abroad. He may go how he likes. I should prefer the small yacht myself—for there seems to be a chance that the small yacht might do me the inestimable service of drowning him. . . .

"*Five o'clock.*—The excitement of feeling that I had got Armadale's future movements completely under my own control, made me so restless, when I returned to my lodgings, that I was obliged to go out again, and do something. A new interest to occupy me being what I wanted, I went to Pimlico to have it out with Mother Oldershaw."

"I walked—and made up my mind, on the way, that I would begin by quarrelling with her. One of my notes of hand being paid already, and Midwinter being willing to pay the other two when they fall due, my present position with the old wretch is as independent a one as I could desire. I always get the better of her when it comes to a downright battle between us, and find her wonderfully civil and obliging the moment I have made her feel that mine is the strongest will of the two. In my present situation, she might be of use to me in various ways, if I could secure her assistance, without trusting her with secrets which I am now more than ever determined to keep to myself. That was my idea as I walked to Pimlico. Upsetting Mother Oldershaw's nerves, in the first place, and then twisting her round my little finger, in the second, promised me, as I thought, an interesting occupation for the rest of the afternoon.

"When I got to Pimlico, a surprise was in store for me. The house was shut up—not only on Mrs. Oldershaw's side, but on Doctor Downward's as well. A padlock was on the shop-door; and a man was hanging about on the watch, who might have been an ordinary idler certainly, but who looked, to my mind, like a policeman in disguise.

"Knowing the risks the doctor runs in his particular form of practice, I suspected at once that something serious had happened, and that even cunning Mrs. Oldershaw was compromised this time. Without stopping, or making any inquiry, therefore, I called the first cab that passed me, and drove to the post-office to which I had desired my letters to be forwarded if any came for me after I left my Thorpe-Ambrose lodging.

"On inquiry a letter was produced for 'Miss Gwilt.' It was in Mother Oldershaw's handwriting, and it told me (as I had supposed) that the doctor had got into a serious difficulty—that she was herself most unfortunately mixed up in the matter—and that they were both in hiding for the present. The letter ended with some sufficiently venomous sentences about my conduct at Thorpe-Ambrose, and with a warning that I have not heard the last of Mrs. Oldershaw yet. It relieved me to find her writing in this way—for she would have been civil and cringing if she had had any suspicion of what I have really got in view. I burnt the letter as soon as the candles came up. And there, for the present, is an end of the connection between Mother Jezebel and me. I must do all my own dirty work now—and I shall be all the safer, perhaps, for trusting nobody's hands to do it but my own.

"*July 31st.*—More useful information for me. I met Midwinter again in the Park (on the pretext that my reputation might suffer, if he called too often at my lodgings); and heard the last news of Armadale, since I left the hotel yesterday.

"After he had written to Miss Milroy, Midwinter took the opportunity of speaking to him about the necessary business arrangements during his absence from the great house. It was decided that the servants should

be put on board wages, and that Mr. Bashwood should be left in charge. (Somehow, I don't like this reappearance of Mr. Bashwood in connection with my present interests, but there is no help for it.) The next question—the question of money—was settled at once by Armadale himself. All his available ready-money (a large sum) is to be lodged by Mr. Bashwood in Coutts's Bank, and to be there deposited in Armadale's name. This, he said, would save him the worry of any further letter-writing to his steward, and would enable him to get what he wanted, when he went abroad, at a moment's notice. The plan thus proposed being certainly the simplest and the safest, was adopted with Midwinter's full concurrence; and here the business discussion would have ended, if the everlasting Mr. Bashwood had not turned up again in the conversation, and prolonged it in an entirely new direction.

"On reflection, it seems to have struck Midwinter that the whole responsibility at Thorpe-Ambrose ought not to rest on Mr. Bashwood's shoulders. Without in the least distrusting him, Midwinter felt, nevertheless, that he ought to have somebody set over him, to apply to, in case of emergency. Armadale made no objection to this; he only asked, in his helpless way, who the person was to be?

"The answer was not an easy one to arrive at. Either of the two solicitors at Thorpe-Ambrose might have been employed—but Armadale was on bad terms with both of them. Any reconciliation with such a bitter enemy as the elder lawyer, Mr. Darch, was out of the question; and reinstating Mr. Pedgift in his former position, implied a tacit sanction on Armadale's part, of the lawyer's abominable conduct towards *me*, which was scarcely consistent with the respect and regard that he felt for a lady who was soon to be his friend's wife. After some further discussion, Midwinter hit on a new suggestion which appeared to meet the difficulty. He proposed that Armadale should write to a respectable solicitor at Norwich, stating his position in general terms, and requesting that gentleman to take charge of his affairs, and to act as Mr. Bashwood's adviser and superintendent when occasion required. Norwich being within an easy railway ride of Thorpe-Ambrose, Armadale saw no objection to the proposal, and promised to write to the Norwich lawyer. Fearing that he might make some mistake, if he wrote without assistance, Midwinter had drawn him out a draft of the necessary letter, and Armadale was now engaged in copying the draft, and also in writing to Mr. Bashwood to lodge the money immediately in Coutts's Bank.

"These details are so dry and uninteresting in themselves, that I hesitated at first about putting them down in my diary. But a little reflection has convinced me that they are too important to be passed over. Looked at from my point of view, they mean this—that Armadale's own act is now cutting him off from all communication with Thorpe-Ambrose, even by letter. *He is as good as dead, already, to everybody he leaves behind him.* The causes which have led to such a result as that, are causes which certainly claim the best place I can give them in these pages.

" *August 1st.*—Nothing to record, but that I have had a long quiet, happy day with Midwinter. He hired a carriage, and we drove to Richmond, and dined there. After to-day's experience, it is impossible to deceive myself any longer. Come what may of it, I love him.

" I have fallen into low spirits since he left me. A persuasion has taken possession of my mind, that the smooth and prosperous course of my affairs since I have been in London, is too smooth and prosperous to last. There is something oppressing me to-night, which is more than the oppression of the heavy London air.

" *August 2nd. Three o'clock.*—My presentiments, like other people's, have deceived me often enough—but I am almost afraid that my presentiment of last night was really prophetic, for once in a way.

" I went after breakfast to a milliner's in this neighbourhood to order a few cheap summer things, and thence to Midwinter's hotel to arrange with him for another day in the country. I drove to the milliner's and to the hotel, and part of the way back. Then, feeling disgusted with the horrid close smell of the cab (somebody had been smoking in it, I suppose), I got out to walk the rest of the way. Before I had been two minutes on my feet, I discovered that I was being followed by a strange man.

" This may mean nothing but that an idle fellow has been struck by my figure, and my appearance generally. My face could have made no impression on him—for it was hidden as usual by my veil. Whether he followed me (in a cab of course) from the milliner's, or from the hotel, I cannot say. Nor am I quite certain whether he did or did not track me to this door. I only know that I lost sight of him before I got back. There is no help for it but to wait till events enlighten me. If there is anything serious in what has happened, I shall soon discover it.

" *Five o'clock.*—It is serious. Ten minutes since, I was in my bedroom, which communicates with the sitting-room. I was just coming out, when I heard a strange voice on the landing outside—a woman's voice. The next instant the sitting-room door was suddenly opened; the woman's voice said, 'Are these the apartments you have got to let?'—and though the landlady, behind her, answered, 'No! higher up, ma'am,' the woman came on straight to my bed-room, as if she had not heard. I had just time to slam the door in her face before she saw me. The necessary explanations and apologies followed between the landlady and the stranger in the sitting-room—and then I was left alone again.

" I have no time to write more. It is plain that somebody has an interest in trying to identify me, and that, but for my own quickness, the strange woman would have accomplished this object by taking me by surprise. She and the man who followed me in the street are, I suspect, in league together; and there is probably somebody in the background whose interests they are serving. Is Mother Oldershaw attacking me in

the dark? or who else can it be? No matter who it is; my present situation is too critical to be trifled with. I must get away from this house to-night, and leave no trace behind me by which I can be followed to another place.

*“ August 3rd.—Gary Street, Tottenham Court Road.—*I got away last night (after writing an excuse to Midwinter, in which ‘my invalid mother’ figured as the all-sufficient cause of my disappearance); and I have found refuge here. It has cost me some money; but my object is attained! Nobody can possibly have traced me from All Saints’ Terrace to this address.

“ After paying my landlady the necessary forfeit for leaving her without notice, I arranged with her son that he should take my boxes in a cab to the cloak-room at the nearest railway station, and send me the ticket in a letter, to wait my application for it at the post-office. While he went his way in one cab, I went mine in another, with a few things for the night in my little hand-bag. I drove straight to the milliner’s shop—which I had observed, when I was there yesterday, had a back entrance into a mews, for the apprentices to go in and out by. I went in at once, leaving the cab waiting for me at the door. ‘A man is following me,’ I said; ‘and I want to get rid of him. Here is my cab-fare; wait ten minutes before you give it to the driver, and let me out at once by the back way! In a moment I was out in the mews—in another, I was in the next street—in a third, I hailed a passing omnibus, and was a free woman again.

“ Having now cut off all communication between me and my last lodgings, the next precaution (in case Midwinter or Armadale are watched) is to cut off all communication, for some days to come at least, between me and the hotel. I have written to Midwinter—making my supposititious mother once more the excuse—to say that I am tied to my nursing duties, and that we must communicate by writing only for the present. Doubtful as I still am of who my hidden enemy really is, I can do no more to defend myself than I have done now.

*“ August 4th.—*The two friends at the hotel have both written to me. Midwinter expresses his regret at our separation, in the tenderest terms. Armadale writes an entreaty for help under very awkward circumstances. A letter from Major Milroy has been forwarded to him from the great house, and he encloses it in his letter to me.

“ Having left the seaside, and placed his daughter safely at the school originally chosen for her (in the neighbourhood of Ely), the major appears to have returned to Thorpe-Ambrose at the close of last week; to have heard then, for the first time, the reports about Armadale and me; and to have written instantly to Armadale to tell him so.

“ The letter is stern and short. Major Milroy dismisses the report as unworthy of credit, because it is impossible for him to believe in such an

act of 'cold-blooded treachery, as the scandal would imply, if the scandal were true. He simply writes to warn Armadale that, if he is not more careful in his actions for the future, he must resign all pretensions to Miss Milroy's hand. 'I neither expect, nor wish for, an answer to this' (the letter ends), 'for I desire to receive no mere protestations in words. By your conduct, and by your conduct alone, I shall judge you as time goes on. Let me also add, that I positively forbid you to consider this letter as an excuse for violating the terms agreed on between us, by writing again to my daughter. You have no need to justify yourself in her eyes—for I fortunately removed her from Thorpe-Ambrose before this abominable report had time to reach her; and I shall take good care, for her sake, that she is not agitated and unsettled by hearing it where she is now.'

"Armadale's petition to me, under these circumstances, entreats (as I am the innocent cause of the new attack on his character), that I will write to the major to absolve him of all indiscretion in the matter, and to say that he could not, in common politeness, do otherwise than accompany me to London. I forgive the impudence of his request, in consideration of the news that he sends me. It is certainly another circumstance in my favour, that the scandal at Thorpe-Ambrose is not to be allowed to reach Miss Milroy's ears. With her temper (if she did hear it) she might do something desperate in the way of claiming her lover, and might compromise me seriously. As for my own course with Armadale, it is easy enough. I shall quiet him by promising to write to Major Milroy; and I shall take the liberty, in my own private interests, of not keeping my word.

"Nothing in the least suspicious has happened to-day. Whoever my enemies are, they have lost me, and between this and the time when I leave England they shall not find me again. I have been to the post-office, and have got the ticket for my luggage, enclosed to me in a letter from All Saints' Terrace as I directed. The luggage itself I shall still leave at the cloak-room, until I see the way before me more clearly than I see it now.

"*August 5th.*—Two letters again from the hotel. Midwinter writes to remind me, in the prettiest possible manner, that he will have lived long enough in the parish by to-morrow to be able to get our marriage licence, and that he proposes applying for it in the usual way at Doctors' Commons. Now, if I am ever to say it, is the time to say No. I can't say No. There is the plain truth—and there is an end of it!

"Armadale's letter is a letter of farewell. He thanks me for my kindness in consenting to write to the major, and bids me good-by till we meet again at Naples. He has learnt from his friend that there are private reasons which will oblige him to forbid himself the pleasure of being present at our marriage. Under these circumstances, there is nothing to keep him in London. He has made all his business arrangements; he goes to Somersetshire by to-night's train; and, after staying some time with Mr. Brock, he will sail for the Mediterranean from the Bristol Channel (in spite of Midwinter's objections) in his own yacht.

"The letter encloses a jeweller's box, with a ring in it—Armadales present to me on my marriage. It is a ruby—but rather a small one, and set in the worst possible taste. He would have given Miss Milroy a ring worth ten times the money, if it had been *her* marriage present. There is no more hateful creature, in my opinion, than a miserly young man. I wonder whether his trumpery little yacht will drown him?

"I am so excited and fluttered, I hardly know what I am writing. Not that I shrink from what is coming—I only feel as if I was being hurried on faster than I quite like to go. At this rate, if nothing happens, Midwinter will have married me, by the end of the week. And then——!

"*August 6th.*—If anything could startle me now, I should feel startled by the news that has reached me to-day.

"On his return to the hotel this morning, after getting the Marriage Licence, Midwinter found a telegram waiting for him. It contained an urgent message from Armadale, announcing that Mr. Brock had had a relapse, and that all hope of his recovery was pronounced by the doctors to be at an end. By the dying man's own desire, Midwinter was summoned to take leave of him, and was entreated by Armadale not to lose a moment in starting for the rectory by the first train.

"The hurried letter which tells me this, tells me also that, by the time I receive it, Midwinter will be on his way to the west. He promises to write at greater length, after he has seen Mr. Brock, by to-night's post.

"This news has an interest for me, which Midwinter little suspects. There is but one human creature, besides myself, who knows the secret of his birth and his name—and that one, is the old man who now lies waiting for him at the point of death. What will they say to each other at the last moment? Will some chance word take them back to the time when I was in Mrs. Armadale's service at Madeira? Will they speak of Me?

"*August 7th.*—The promised letter has just reached me. No parting words have been exchanged between them—it was all over before Midwinter reached Somersetshire. Armadale met him at the rectory gate with the news that Mr. Brock was dead.

"I try to struggle against it, but, coming after the strange complication of circumstances that has been closing round me for weeks past, there is something in this latest event of all that shakes my nerves. But one last chance of detection stood in my way when I opened my diary yesterday. When I open it to-day, that chance is removed by Mr. Brock's death. It means something; I wish I knew what.

"The funeral is to be on Saturday morning. Midwinter will attend it as well as Armadale. But he proposes returning to London first; and he writes word that he will call to-night, in the hope of seeing me on his way from the station to the hotel. Even if there was any risk in it, I should see him, as things are now. But there is no risk if he comes here from the station, instead of coming from the hotel.

"*Five o'clock.*—I was not mistaken in believing that my nerves were all unstrung. Trifles that would not have cost me a second thought at other times, weigh heavily on my mind now.

"Two hours since, in despair of knowing how to get through the day, I bethought myself of the milliner who is making my summer dress. I had intended to go and try it on yesterday—but it slipped out of my memory, in the excitement of hearing about Mr. Brock. So I went this afternoon, eager to do anything that might help me to get rid of myself. I have returned, feeling more uneasy and more depressed than I felt when I went out—for I have come back, fearing that I may yet have reason to repent not having left my unfinished dress on the milliner's hands.

"Nothing happened to me, this time, in the street. It was only in the trying-on room that my suspicions were roused; and, there, it certainly did cross my mind that the attempt to discover me, which I defeated at All Saints' Terrace, was not given up yet, and that some of the shopwomen had been tampered with, if not the mistress herself.

"Can I give myself anything in the shape of a reason for this impression? Let me think a little.

"I certainly noticed two things which were out of the ordinary routine, under the circumstances. In the first place, there were twice as many women as were needed in the trying-on room. This looked suspicious—and yet, I might have accounted for it in more ways than one. Is it not the slack time now? and don't I know by experience that I am the sort of woman about whom other women are always spitefully curious? I thought again, in the second place, that one of the assistants persisted rather oddly in keeping me turned in a particular direction, with my face towards the glazed and curtained door that led into the work-room. But, after all, she gave a reason, when I asked for it. She said the light fell better on me that way—and, when I looked round, there was the window to prove her right. Still, these trifles produced such an effect on me, at the time, that I purposely found fault with the dress, so as to have an excuse for trying it on again, before I told them where I lived, and had it sent home. Pure fancy, I dare say. Pure fancy, perhaps, at the present moment. I don't care—I shall act on instinct (as they say), and give up the dress. In plainer words still, I won't go back.

"*Midnight.*—Midwinter came to see me as he promised. An hour has passed since we said good-night; and here I still sit, with my pen in my hand, thinking of him. No words of mine can describe what has passed between us. The end of it is all I can write in these pages—and the end of it is, that he has shaken my resolution. For the first time since I saw the easy way to Armadale's life at Thorpe-Ambrose, I feel as if the man whom I have doomed in my own thoughts, had a chance of escaping me.

"Is it my love for Midwinter that has altered me? Or is it his love for me that has taken possession, not only of all I wish to give him, but of

all I wish to keep from him as well? I feel as if I had lost myself—lost myself, I mean, in him—all through the evening. He was in great agitation about what had happened in Somersetshire—and he made me feel as disheartened and as wretched about it as he did. Though he never confessed it in words, I know that Mr. Brock's death has startled him as an ill-omen for our marriage—I know it, because I feel Mr. Brock's death as an ill-omen too. The superstition—his superstition—took so strong a hold on me, that when we grew calmer, and he spoke of the future—when he told me that he must either break his engagement with his new employers, or go abroad, as he is pledged to go, on Monday next—I actually shrank at the thought of our marriage following close on Mr. Brock's funeral; I actually said to him, in the impulse of the moment, 'Go, and begin your new life alone! go, and leave me here to wait for happier times.'

"He took me in his arms. He sighed, and kissed me with an angelic tenderness. He said—oh, so softly and so sadly!—'I have no life now, apart from you.' As those words passed his lips, the thought seemed to rise in my mind like an echo, 'Why not live out all the days that are left to me, happy and harmless in a love like this!' I can't explain it—I can't realize it. That was the thought in me at the time; and that is the thought in me still. I see my own hand while I write the words—and I ask myself whether it is really the hand of Lydia Gwilt!

"Armadales—

"No! I will never write, I will never think of Armadale again.

"Yes! Let me write once more—let me think once more of him, because it quiets me to know that he is going away, and that the sea will have parted us before I am married. His old home is home to him no longer, now that the loss of his mother has been followed by the loss of his best and earliest friend. When the funeral is over, he has decided to sail the same day for the foreign seas. We may, or we may not, meet at Naples. Shall I be an altered woman, if we do? I wonder! I wonder!

"August 8th.—A line from Midwinter. He has gone back to Somersetshire to be in readiness for the funeral to-morrow; and he will return here (after bidding Armadale good-by) to-morrow evening.

"The last forms and ceremonies preliminary to our marriage have been complied with. I am to be his wife, on Monday next. The hour must not be later than half-past ten—which will give us just time, when the service is over, to get from the church door to the railway, and to start on our journey to Naples the same day.

"To-day—Saturday—Sunday! I am not afraid of the time; the time will pass. I am not afraid of myself, if I can only keep all thoughts but one out of my mind. I love him! Day and night, till Monday comes, I will think of nothing but that. I love him!

"Four o'clock.—Other thoughts are forced into my mind in spite of

me. My suspicions of yesterday were no mere fancies; the milliner *has* been tampered with. My folly in going back to her house has led to my being traced here. I am absolutely certain that I never gave the woman my address—and yet my new gown was sent home to me at two o'clock to-day!

"A man brought it with the bill, and a civil message to say that, as I had not called at the appointed time to try it on again, the dress had been finished and sent to me. He caught me in the passage; I had no choice but to pay the bill, and dismiss him. Any other proceeding, as events have now turned out, would have been pure folly. The messenger (not the man who followed me in the street, but another spy sent to look at me beyond all doubt) would have declared he knew nothing about it, if I had spoken to him. The milliner would tell me to my face, if I went to her, that I had given her my address. The one useful thing to do now, is to set my wits to work in the interests of my own security, and to step out of the false position in which my own rashness has placed me—if I can.

"*Seven o'clock.*—My spirits have risen again. I believe I am in a fair way of extricating myself already.

"I have just come back from a long round in a cab. First, to the cloak-room of the Great Western, to get the luggage which I sent there from All Saints' Terrace. Next, to the cloak-room of the South Eastern, to leave my luggage (labelled in Midwinter's name), to wait for me till the starting of the tidal train on Monday. Next, to the General Post Office, to post a letter to Midwinter at the rectory, which he will receive to-morrow morning. Lastly, back again to this house—from which I shall move no more till Monday comes.

"My letter to Midwinter will, I have little doubt, lead to his seconding (quite innocently) the precautions that I am taking for my own safety. The shortness of the time at our disposal, on Monday, will oblige him to pay his bill at the hotel and to remove his luggage, before the marriage ceremony takes place. All I ask him to do beyond this, is to take the luggage himself to the South Eastern (so as to make any inquiries useless which may address themselves to the servants at the hotel)—and, that done, to meet me at the church door, instead of calling for me here. The rest concerns nobody but myself. When Sunday night or Monday morning comes, it will be hard indeed—freed as I am now from all encumbrances—if I can't give the people who are watching me the slip for the second time.

"It seems needless enough to have written to Midwinter to-day, when he is coming back to me to-morrow night. But it was impossible to ask, what I have been obliged to ask of him, without making my false family circumstances once more the excuse; and having this to do—I must own the truth—I wrote to him because, after what I suffered on the last occasion, I can never again deceive him to his face.

" *August 9th.—Two o'clock.*—I rose early this morning, more depressed in spirits than usual. The re-beginning of one's life, at the re-beginning of every day, has always been something weary and hopeless to me for years past. I dreamt too all through the night—not of Midwinter and of my married life, as I had hoped to dream—but of the wretched conspiracy to discover me, by which I have been driven from one place to another, like a hunted animal. Nothing in the shape of a new revelation enlightened me in my sleep. All I could guess, dreaming, was what I had guessed waking, that Mother Oldershaw is the enemy who is attacking me in the dark. Except old Bashwood (whom it would be ridiculous to think of in such a serious matter as this), who else but Mother Oldershaw can have an object to serve by interfering with my proceedings at the present time?

" My restless night has, however, produced one satisfactory result. It has led to my winning the good graces of the servant here, and securing all the assistance she can give me when the time comes for making my escape.

" The girl noticed this morning that I looked pale and anxious. I took her into my confidence, to the extent of telling her that I was privately engaged to be married, and that I had enemies who were trying to part me from my sweetheart. This instantly roused her sympathy—and a present of a ten-shilling piece for her kind services to me did the rest. In the intervals of her house-work she has been with me nearly the whole morning; and I have found out, among other things, that *her* sweetheart is a private soldier in the Guards, and that she expects to see him to-morrow. I have got money enough left, little as it is, to turn the head of any Private in the British army—and, if the person appointed to watch me to-morrow is a man, I think it just possible that he may find his attention disagreeably diverted from Miss Gwilt in the course of the evening.

" When Midwinter came here last from the railway, he came at half-past eight. How am I to get through the weary, weary hours between this and the evening? I think I shall darken my bedroom, and drink the blessing of oblivion from my bottle of Drops.

" *Eleven o'clock.*—We have parted for the last time before the day comes that makes us man and wife.

" He has left me, as he left me before, with an absorbing subject of interest to think of in his absence. I noticed a change in him the moment he entered the room. When he told me of the funeral, and of his parting with Armadale on board the yacht, though he spoke with feelings deeply moved, he spoke with a mastery over himself which ~~is~~ new to me in my experience of him. It was the same when our talk turned next on our own hopes and prospects. He was plainly disappointed when he found that my family embarrassments would prevent our meeting to-morrow, and plainly uneasy at the prospect of leaving me to find my way by myself

on Monday to the church. But there was a certain hopefulness and composure of manner underlying it all, which produced so strong an impression on me that I was obliged to notice it. 'You know what odd fancies take possession of me sometimes,' I said. 'Shall I tell you the fancy that has taken possession of me now? I can't help thinking that something has happened since we last saw each other, which you have not told me yet.'

"Something *has* happened,' he answered. 'And it is something which you ought to know.'

"With those words he took out his pocket-book, and produced two written papers from it. One he looked at and put back. The other he placed on the table before me. Keeping his hand on it for a moment, he spoke again.

"'Before I tell you what this is, and how it came into my possession,' he said, 'I must own something that I have concealed from you. It is no more serious confession than the confession of my own weakness.'

"He then acknowledged to me, that the renewal of his friendship with Armadale had been clouded, through the whole period of their intercourse in London, by his own superstitious misgivings. On every occasion when they were alone together, the terrible words of his father's death-bed letter, and the terrible confirmation of them in the warnings of the Dream, were present to his mind. Day after day, the conviction that fatal consequences to Armadale would come of the renewal of their friendship, and of my share in accomplishing it, had grown stronger and stronger in its influence over him. He had obeyed the summons which called him to the rector's bedside, with the firm intention of confiding his previsions of coming trouble to Mr. Brock; and he had been doubly confirmed in his superstition, when he found that Death had entered the house before him, and had parted them, in this world, for ever. He had travelled back to be present at the funeral, with a secret sense of relief at the prospect of being parted from Armadale, and with a secret resolution to make the after-meeting agreed on between us three at Naples, a meeting that should never take place. With that purpose in his heart, he had gone up alone to the room prepared for him, on his arrival at the rectory, and had opened a letter which he found waiting for him on the table. The letter had only that day been discovered—dropped and lost—under the bed on which Mr. Brock had died. It was in the rector's handwriting throughout; and the person to whom it *was* addressed, was Midwinter himself.

"Having told me this, nearly in the words in which I have written it, he lifted his hand from the written paper that lay on the table between us.

"'Read it,' he said; 'and you will not need to be told that my mind is at peace again, and that I took Allan's hand at parting, with a heart that was worthier of Allan's love.'

"I read the letter. There was no superstition to be conquered in my mind; there were no old feelings of gratitude towards Armadale, to be

roused in my heart—and yet, the effect which the letter had had on Midwinter, was, I firmly believe, more than matched by the effect that the letter now produced on Me.

“It was vain to ask him to leave it, and to let me read it again (as I wished) when I was left by myself. He is determined not to let it out of his own possession; he is determined to keep it side by side with that other paper which I had seen him take out of his pocket-book, and which contains the written narrative of Armadale's Dream. All I could do was to ask his leave to copy it; and this he granted readily. I wrote the copy in his presence; and I now place it here in my diary, to mark a day which is one of the memorable days of my life.

“Boscombe Rectory, August 2nd.

“MY DEAR MIDWINTER,—For the first time since the beginning of my illness, I found strength enough yesterday to look over my letters. One among them is a letter from Allan, which has been lying unopened on my table for ten days past. He writes to me in great distress, to say that there has been dissension between you, and that you have left him. If you still remember what passed between us, when you first opened your heart to me in the Isle of Man, you will be at no loss to understand how I have thought over this miserable news, through the night that has now passed, and you will not be surprised to hear that I have roused myself this morning to make the effort of writing to you. Although I am far from despairing of myself, I dare not, at my age, trust too confidently to my prospects of recovery. While the time is still my own, I must employ it for Allan's sake and for yours.

“I want no explanation of the circumstances which have parted you from your friend. If my estimate of your character is not founded on an entire delusion, the one influence which can have led to your estrangement from Allan, is the influence of that evil spirit of Superstition, which I have once already cast out of your heart—which I will once again conquer, please God, if I have strength enough to make my pen speak my mind to you in this letter.

“It is no part of my design to combat the belief which I know you to hold, that mortal creatures may be the objects of supernatural intervention in their pilgrimage through this world. Speaking as a reasonable man, I own that I cannot prove you to be wrong. Speaking as a believer in the Bible, I am bound to go farther, and to admit that you possess a higher than any human warrant for the faith that is in you. The one object which I have it at heart to attain, is to induce you to free yourself from the paralysing fatalism of the heathen and the savage, and to look at the mysteries that perplex, and the portents that daunt you, from the Christian's point of view. If I can succeed in this, I shall clear your mind of the ghastly doubts that now oppress it, and I shall re-unite you to your friend, never to be parted from him again.

“I have no means of seeing and questioning you. I can only send

this letter to Allan to be forwarded, if he knows, or can discover, your present address. Placed in this position towards you, I am bound to assume all that *can* be assumed in your favour. I will take it for granted that something has happened to you or to Allan, which to your mind has not only confirmed the fatalist conviction in which your father died, but has added a new and terrible meaning to the warning which he sent you in his death-bed letter.

"On this common ground I meet you. On this common ground I appeal to your higher nature and your better sense.

"Preserve your present conviction that the events which have happened (be they what they may) are not to be reconciled with ordinary mortal coincidences and ordinary mortal laws; and view your own position by the best and clearest light that your superstition can throw on it. What are you? You are a helpless instrument in the hands of Fate. You are doomed, beyond all human capacity of resistance, to bring misery and destruction blindfold on a man to whom you have harmlessly and gratefully united yourself in the bonds of a brother's love. All that is morally firmest in your will and morally purest in your aspirations, avails nothing against the hereditary impulsion of you towards evil, caused by a crime which your father committed before you were born. In what does that belief end? It ends in the darkness in which you are now lost; in the self-contradictions in which you are now bewildered—in the stubborn despair by which a man profanes his own soul, and lowers himself to the level of the brutes that perish.

"Look up, my poor suffering brother—look up, my hardly-tried, my well-loved friend, higher than this! Meet the doubts that now assail you from the blessed vantage-ground of Christian courage and Christian hope; and your heart will turn again to Allan, and your mind will be at peace. Happen what may, God is all-merciful, God is all-wise: natural or supernatural, it happens through Him. The mystery of Evil that perplexes our feeble minds, the sorrow and the suffering that torture us in this little life, leave the one great truth unshaken that the destiny of man is in the hands of his Creator, and that God's blessed Son died to make us worthier of it. Nothing that is done in unquestioning submission to the wisdom of the Almighty, is done wrong. No evil exists, out of which, in obedience to His laws, Good may not come. Be true to what Christ tells you is true. Encourage in yourself, be the circumstances what they may, all that is loving, all that is grateful, all that is patient, all that is forgiving, towards your fellow-men. And humbly and trustfully leave the rest to the God who made you, and to the Saviour who loved you better than his own life.

"This is the faith in which I have lived, by the Divine help and mercy, from my youth upward. I ask you earnestly, I ask you confidently, to make it your faith too. It is the mainspring of all the good I have ever done, of all the happiness I have ever known; it lightens my darkness, it sustains my hope; it comforts and quiets me, lying here, to

live or die—I know not which. Let it sustain, comfort, and enlighten you. It will help you in your sorest need, as it has helped me in mine. It will show you another purpose in the events which brought you and Allan together, than the purpose which your guilty father foresaw. Strange things, I do not deny it, have happened to you already. Stranger things still may happen before long, which I may not live to see. Remember, if that time comes, that I died firmly disbelieving in your influence over Allan being other than an influence for good. The great sacrifice of the Atonement—I say it reverently—has its mortal reflections, even in this world. If danger ever threatens Allan, you, whose father took his father's life—You, and no other, may be the man whom the providence of God has appointed to save him.

“Come to me, if I live. Go back to the friend who loves you, whether I live or die.—Yours affectionately to the last,

“DECIMUS BROCK.”

“You, and no other, may be the man whom the providence of God has appointed to save him!”

“Those are the words which have shaken me to the soul. Those are the words which make me feel as if the dead man had left his grave, and had put his hand on the place in my heart where my terrible secret lies hidden from every living creature but myself. One part of the letter has come true already. The danger that it foresees, threatens Armadale at this moment—and threatens him from Me!”

“If the favouring circumstances which have driven me thus far, drive me on to the end; and if that old man's last earthly conviction is prophetic of the truth, Armadale will escape me, do what I may. And Midwinter will be the victim who is sacrificed to save his life.

“It is horrible! it is impossible! it shall never be! At the thinking of it only, my hand trembles, and my heart sinks. I bless the trembling that unnerves me! I bless the sinking that turns me faint! I bless those words in the letter which have revived the relenting thoughts that first came to me two days since! Is it hard, now that events are taking me, smoothly and safely, nearer and nearer to the End—is it hard to conquer the temptation to go on? No! If there is only a chance of harm coming to Midwinter, the dread of that chance is enough to decide me—enough to strengthen me to conquer the temptation, for his sake. I have never loved him yet, never, never, never as I love him now!”

“*Sunday, August 10th.*—The eve of my wedding-day! I close and lock this book, never to write in it, never to open it again.

“I have won the great victory; I have trampled my own wickedness under foot. I am innocent; I am happy again. My love! my angel! when to-morrow gives me to you, I will not have a thought in my heart which is not your thought, as well as mine!”

The Jews' Dairling-Place, Jerusalem.

(November, 1859.)

I.

SHARP clash the hoofs on marbles worn,
In Zion's ruin-paven street :
Spare our tired horses' floundering feet ;
Light down, and tread the ways forlorn,
Where all seems canker'd with disease :

If there be houses tainted still

With scurf and scale of human ill,
They needs must crumble down like these.
And leprous men beside the way,

On whom the ancient curse is laid,

Crouch featureless in cruel day,

And dumb and darkling sign for aid.

Cast down your alms, and hasten on,

Foot-deep in Salem's festering dust,

Past close-barr'd hovels, which encrust

Those walls, once marble, rose and white,

Which Herod built, or Solomon.

Go down with yonder abject few,

In castan green or dim white veil,

Who hurry by to raise anew

Their feeble voice of endless wail,

Before Moriah's stones of might.

Scant beards are torn, old eyelids stream .

With many a sad, unhelpful tear ;

Man's weeping and earth's ruin seem

To find their common centre here.

And scarcely more hath Time's decay

Channell'd the storm-worn course on high,

Than kissing lips have worn away

The giant under-masonry.

II.

The Wise King stood on Zion ridge,
 With purpled priests and chiefs in mail;
 Where Temple-wards his eastern bridge
 Aërial, massive, spanned the vale.
 Day and night his awful eyes
 Gazed into all mysteries;
 Night and day his voice was heard
 Touching man, and beast, and bird,
 And all growing things that be,
 Towering great, or subtly small;
 From the red-arm'd cedar-tree
 To the hyssop on the wall.
 Did it vex his heart to know,
 How that mean sad herb would grow
 From each vast and polished square
 His high word had order'd there?
 It springs austere and pale and faint;
 No dancing showers, like fairies' feet,
 Bring feather'd fern, and wallflower sweet,
 And ivy-nets and mosses quaint,
 That cheer decay in Northern lands;
 Here spiny weeds grow harsh and grey,
 Even as they grew, that paschal day,
 When they were pluck'd by mocking hands,
 To crown the Victim led away
 There mourn the sons whose sires bade slay.

III.

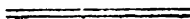
Well, we are modern ruins too,
 With back-turn'd looks to woeful when;
 Yet can be keen as hounds at view,
 For toil, or sport, or strife of men.
 Grief cannot crush while strength is left.
 O city of all sorrows, we
 Forget our transient pains in thee!
 Seeing much abides, though more be left.
 The fountains of our eyes are dry
 With change and labour, all the years;
 Yet this we care not to deny,
 That, be they shed by girls or boys,
 For love, or pain, or broken toys,
 Even idle tears are always tears.

Why should our wayward souls refuse
 To sever scorn from sympathy ?
 One cannot weep with wailing Jews :
 They howl, as toothless wolves may cry ;
 They chatter like the autumn crane ;
 Each stands, himself a prophecy,
 And moans his psalm, its hope unknown,
 While the salt drops flow on in vain ;
 Ah me, poor slaves whom none will buy,
 Sad thralls whom none will own !
 Tears we have none ; with awe and sighs
 We feel that these mad mourners' woe
 Strikes hard on one deep sounding chord :
 That the bright Temple lieth low
 Where, in the ancient centuries,
 Men saw the great Light of the Lord.
 Where eyes of flesh in latter days
 Beheld the Saviour come and go,—
 A wide world's Light of softer rays.

* * * * *

What hope? the helpless thought intrudes :
 —Pass the near postern : mount and ride
 Where Hinnom's vultures wheel and feast.
 Stand, and look north and south, and east
 Down silent Kedron's populous side ;
 There rest—for furlongs, thick and wide,
 In shallow soil, or rock-hewn cell—
 The multitudes, the multitudes.
 And there is peace for Israel.

R. St. J. T.



Catherine de Bourbon.

THANKS to the multitude of French memoirs, and to our English love of "gossip, undistilled biography," we are very familiar with the lives, as well as the scandals, of many mediæval and modern Frenchwomen. We know the stories about Agnes Sorel and the good she did, and the virtuous indignation of the monks of Jumièges; the passion of Henry the Fourth for Gabrielle d'Estrées, and others; the daily transacting of public business by Louis the Fourteenth with "la vieille sée," as St. Simon calls her, by his side; as well as the more creditable lives of Madame de Longueville and Madame de Sablé, and the political and social careers of Madame Roland and Madame Récamier. Among such women Catherine de Bourbon, the fondly-loved sister of Henry the Great, has no place; her name will not be found mixed with any scandal, though she lived at the court of Henry of Navarre, "*louvoyant entre les amours de son frère, et les prétentions et les galanteries des jeunes seigneurs de son parti.*"

Madame d'Armuillé has lately made her the subject of a charming "*étude historique,*" although, in truth, her name scarcely figures in history, for she was a remarkable example of how great and how good may be the influence of a woman who is content to perform the duties of that station in which God has placed her. She neither sought activity nor notoriety. Brought up a Calvinist, she encouraged if she did not inspire in Henry the principles that bore fruit in the edict of Nantes; and before she died, she gained a victory over the Pope himself by obtaining his recognition of her marriage, while she was still a heretic.

Catherine de Bourbon was one of the two surviving children of Antoine de Bourbon and the celebrated Jeanne d'Albret, Queen of Navarre. Two elder children had died, one because a chilly nurse kept it too hot, and another because a careless one played at ball with it; and when another son arrived, Jeanne's father resolved to rear him in his own way, and accordingly, "*si tost qu'il fût né, et lui frottoit les lèvres d'une gousse d'ail, et lui faisoit succer une goutte de vin.*" Catherine was born the year after Elizabeth became Queen of England; and it was perhaps fortunate for these children and for France, that they were soon left in the care of a mother far more capable of fulfilling the duties of education than their other parent. Though Antoine de Bourbon was said to be "*d'une belle et rare vertu,*" in matters of religion he had earned for himself the title of "*l'eschangeur,*" and changes of religion in those times were changes of politics and principles. Four years after his death his widow formally and finally left the Roman Catholic Church, and she soon showed herself an uncompromising Calvinist, "*d'une bienveillance perturbatrice*"

for the salvation of the people of Béarn, whom she forbade to celebrate the mass, while she proceeded to confiscate ecclesiastical property, and to destroy sacred images and altars.

It was only to be expected that she would thus bring on herself the enmity of her Catholic relatives and neighbours; and the first danger that threatened little Catherine came from a plot, organized between the Duke of Guise and Philip the Second of Spain, for seizing Jeanne, putting her into the hands of the Inquisition, imprisoning her children, and dividing Navarre betwixt France and Spain. A strange accident defeated their plans. A messenger bearing despatches from Guise to Philip fell ill on the road, and the Good Samaritan who came to his relief was a servant of the Queen of Spain, who was dispensing the charities of his mistress. He removed him to his own lodging, where the sick man, partly in self-glorification, and partly to repay kindness with confidence, mentioned his employers, and showed the letters he was carrying. He was brought to the presence of the Queen of Spain, to whom he told his tale, and she, to save her cousin from so terrible a fate, warned the French ambassador, and wrote to the King and Queen-Mother of France. The ambassador, knowing how little likely Catherine de Medicis would be to disturb her own relations with Spain for the sake of the liberty of a Protestant Queen of Navarre, contrived to send word secretly to Jeanne of her danger; and the plot, once discovered, fell to the ground.

Jeanne was now occupied with the education of her daughter, and education it was in the broadest sense of the word. When she made out her scheme for this purpose, she began, as a few years later she began and ended her will, by urging on all to whom she could appeal, the choosing suitable friends and attendants for her child—"des femmes dont la vie entière est un exemple"—while she placed the control of her intellectual culture in the hands of the celebrated scholar, Theodore Beza. Catherine was to learn Greek, Latin, and Hebrew, as princesses in our day learn Latin and French and German. She had teachers for history and poetry, which probably involved the learning French, as her mother-tongue was the Béarnais, which her brother Henry talked even when first taken as a boy to see the King of France. Then she was to be duly taught Calvinism, though she was allowed to dance the "*voltas and corramentos*" of Italy, and "*les pavaues d'Espagne*;" and her mother wound up with the hope that she would be "*soumise aux femmes vertueuses qui vont diriger ses pas au milieu de tant d'écueils.*" Shoals and quicksands were not likely to be wanting, and among other cares for Catherine's happiness, her mother spent time and thought in building and decorating Castle Beziat, near Pau, as a retreat for her from the gaieties or pettiness of her court.

The year 1572, Catherine's thirteenth year, was a sadly eventful one to her. In February she left Pau with her mother for Paris, and for the first time found herself surrounded by the splendour of royalty. Quaint must have been her own appearance. She was, if not beautiful, very

attractive, though delicate-looking and slightly lame, and she wore a dress "coupée à la mode Huguenot," which in the midst of the magnificence of the attendants of Catherine de Medicis must have looked as strange as that of a lady who should appear at court now-a-days with neither crinoline nor false hair. These brilliant scenes had not lost their novelty when she was left by her mother's death to contemplate them alone. This event occurred in June. On the eighteenth of August was celebrated the unwilling marriage of her brother, now King of Navarre, with Margaret of Valois; on the twenty-third of that same month began the massacre of St. Bartholomew, when the heartless Catherine de Medicis let the young queen take leave of her, and go to possible death, saying to one who remonstrated, "S'il plait à Dieu, elle n'aura point de mal." During that night a company of archers fetched Henry of Navarre from his bed, and brought him and the Prince de Condé to the presence of the King of France. "Il leur montra un monceau de corps morts, et avec d'horribles menaces, sans vouloir écouter leur raisons, il leur dit, 'La mort ou la messe.' Ils choisirent plutôt le dernier que le premier: ils abjurèrent le Calvinisme." Whether Henry then abjured for his sister, too, is not clearly told, but she was almost immediately after formally absolved from her heresy by the Cardinal de Bourbon, her uncle. Child as she was, she was probably stupefied by the hideous scenes around her. Macrin, her tutor, was murdered, as well as Teligny, who had come with her and her mother from Pau, and her friends, the wives of Teligny and Coligny, had only escaped with difficulty into exile. For the three following years Catherine lived in what was to all intents and purposes imprisonment: so close was the surveillance over her, and indeed over Henry too, for they were not allowed to meet except in the presence of others. But, in 1575, when Charles the Ninth died, she must have begun to discover her own importance, for his successor, directly after ascending the throne, offered to marry her. The queen-mother, however, did her best to frustrate his intentions, for she represented her as ill-made and dwarfish, while she took care Henry the Third should not see her, and kept her by every means in her power in the background. This retirement was evidently accepted by Catherine with satisfaction: it relieved her from the sight of dissipation and intrigue, which were as offensive to her principles as foreign to her nature; but her brother plunged into the midst of the pleasures of the court, as well from enjoyment of them as from feeling like others have done before and since, that the best security lay in floating along the surface-stream, leaving the world in ignorance of his talents and his principles, if not in doubt whether he had any.

In February, 1576, Henry threw off the mask and escaped, and was soon in a position to demand the release of his sister; and Catherine, attended by Sully, and Madame de Signonville, the friend her mother had especially bequeathed to her, joined him at Nérac, in Guienne. She was sixteen and he was twenty-two, and their friends and followers were not much older, but their court though gay was correct. Sully danced, and

Catherine taught him new steps in private to be performed a week after before the king ; Turenne (father of the Marshal) paid her intellectual homage, and says, "Madame et moy parlions souvent ensemble ; elle me disait familièrement ses conceptions, et moy les miennes." He was as brilliant as Mornay was serious and solid, but Mornay was a patriarch amongst them at seven-and-twenty. He had been doomed by his family to an ecclesiastical life, but had embraced the doctrines and principles of the Calvinists ; and while he set them all an example by his truly religious life, he diligently fanned the Protestant tendencies of the princess. But this state of things was interrupted by a daring step of Catherine de Medicis, who, feeling the importance of attaching Henry to her party, first proposed a marriage between Catherine and the presumptive heir to the French throne, and when that was refused, declared her intention of paying a visit to Nérac herself, carrying with her attendants as little likely to assist in her ostensible object of reconciling Henry to his queen as was the volatile Margaret herself.

The result of the arrival of the queen was a great change in the exterior of the life of the court. Margaret and Catherine seem to have agreed to differ on Sundays and holidays, Margaret hearing mass at a picturesque chapel in the depths of a wood, and Catherine "sitting under" a Calvinist divine in the town ; and the rest of their time they joined in all the fantastic gaiety then in vogue—balls, promenades, on horseback, or in litters of cloth of gold. Margaret seemed to find it quite pleasant to be good, for she wrote long after : "Nous avions conversations et plaisirs honnestes, et ma cour de Nérac en 1579 était si belle et si plaisante que nous n'enviions pas celle de France, y ayant Madame la Princesse de Navarre, ma sœur." The little court, however, was soon dispersed, Henry to "la guerre des amoureux," Margaret back to the Louvre, and Catherine to Pau, where she took on herself, at twenty, the duties of governor and lieutenant-general of Béarn. She had passed through an ordeal since she had left it last, and gained many an experience ; perhaps, as was said of her brother—

Souvent l'infortune aux rois est nécessaire,

—and the early loss of her mother and her consequent sojourn at the court of Catherine de Medicis had been useful in strengthening her character, giving her courage, and fixing in her mind the religious principles she had inherited. She had conformed for a time to the Catholic Church, and later, had openly left it, and now looked forward to realizing her mother's wish to protestantize Béarn. It was at this moment Philip the Second made proposals to Henry for her hand, offering, if accepted, to obtain from the Pope a divorce for him from Margaret of Valois—a somewhat strange article in a marriage contract ; but Catherine refused him, avowedly on religious grounds. Two years later another suitor appeared in the person of the Duke of Savoy ; the Duke of Lorraine offered her his hand ; the Duke of Wirtemberg was proposed ; and Elizabeth of England expressed a hope she would look favourably on

James Stuart of Scotland. But for one reason or another, Henry or Catherine rejected all these proposals.

In 1584, Margaret of Valois joined the League, and went openly to war with Henry, who she knew could with difficulty support a contest against her and the Guises. Catherine, with the help of her friend and former tutor, Theodore Beza, pawned her jewels to supply him with the means of carrying on the war, which lasted above two years; her ladies followed her example. And when she appealed to the municipality of Pau for fifteen thousand crowns, and they refused it, the townspeople subscribed for her sixteen thousand. The struggle was ended by Henry's victory at Courtrai in 1587, and he hastened in triumph to Béarn, carrying with him the twenty-two flags he had taken in the battle, and accompanied by his cousin the Count de Soissons, who was to exercise for many years after so unhappy an influence over Catherine's life.

The character of the Count de Soissons is one not worth attempting to analyze: he can hardly be said to have had either character or principles, or even to have been actuated by anything more than the impulses of the hour, and to have followed whichever impulse was most attractive at the moment,—“all things by turns, and nothing long.” He was a dashing warrior, fighting, it mattered little to him if it were for Henry of France or Henry of Navarre; a Protestant (though probably, as an honest Italian priest said of his Indian converts, “con molte cose del diavolo”), he received Catherine de Medicis as his guest. The orgies of Nogent and Blandy excited curiosity as much as they outraged decency; his gallantries at court, and his exploits at war, were on every one's lips. And this was the suitor Henry approved for his sister. They had been playfellows in childhood and companions in youth, and now, with her brother's wish and consent, Catherine promised him her hand. Whether the Count de Soissons was as sincere in his protestations of attachment as Catherine was in the love she gave him, may fairly be doubted. It is clear that Henry soon regretted what he had done, and quite clear that De Soissons gave him ample cause to do so. Even before he went back to his allegiance to the King of France, Henry announced this defection to his sister in a letter he sent by a messenger who carried a communication from James of Scotland; but Catherine received the messenger coolly, talked about the rigours of the Scotch climate, and hoped and trusted in her lover, with whom she corresponded secretly by means of one of her ladies.

When, in 1589, Henry became, “*et par droit de conquête et par droit de naissance*,” King of France, he constituted Catherine regent of Navarre as well as of Béarn; and she devoted herself to the internal administration of the kingdom, corresponding daily with her ministers on points of detail, and often retired to that “Château Chéri” her mother so long before provided for her. Her life was peaceful,—employed on the duties immediately surrounding her; but she kept a watchful eye on what was passing beyond; and while Henry's “white plume shone” on the field of Ivry, she took an

opportunity of making an attack on Spain to assist Antonio Perez, which was a useful diversion in her brother's favour. Suddenly her own tranquillity was interrupted in a way she little expected. She had kept up a correspondence with the Count de Soissons with the assistance of Madame de Grammont and Madame de Paugeas, who were aware how little it could be agreeable to her brother, and she trusted them fully : for whatever knowledge of life she had gained during her residence at the Louvre, she had not learnt to suspect. Both these ladies played her false, to gratify passions and carry on intrigues of their own.

The count appeared at Pau, having left the army on a false excuse, and imploring her to believe in this proof of his devotion and consent to an immediate marriage, succeeded so far as to obtain from her a written promise, witnessed by Madame de Grammont. Though he did not know of the promise till long after, Henry was furious with the count for going to Pau, and with his sister for receiving him. De Soissons, too, was no longer a popular hero, and the little public of Béarn was excited against him, and the princess learnt at last how many were the foes she had in her own household. Thousands of stories were circulated about the interview, some, characteristic of the age, saying that the count had used the infernal arts of the Medicis to bewitch the princess ; but Catherine had the courage and forbearance not to descend to the "noble art of self-justification," except in so far as to write a touching and dignified letter of remonstrance to her brother when he had sent M. de Paugeas to arrest the count, and M. de Ravignan to inform her she was a prisoner in her own castle. It is said that Henry shed tears as he read the letters : tears, we may hope, partly of self-reproach that he had allowed intrigues to surround and compromise his sister, by giving ear to the cruel tale-bearing of Madame de Paugeas. He had already reproved Madame de Grammont, writing to her, "*Je n'eusse pas pensé cela de vous, à qui je ne diray que ce mot : que toutes personnes qui voudront brouiller ma sœur avec moy, je ne leur pardonneray jamais.*" But if Catherine was able to deprecate his wrath towards herself, the Count de Soissons was not, and was, apparently, at no pains to do so. As soon as he was at liberty, he audaciously presented himself before Henry, and took the first opportunity of kicking the Baron de Paugeas downstairs in the king's house. We cannot wonder at Henry's seeking another match for his sister, but it is difficult to excuse the course he took and obliged Sully to take, except by supposing he was incapable of comprehending her constancy, or that he really was swayed alternately by his love for her and the necessity he felt for breaking off the marriage : when he was with her, he coaxed and threatened ; when she was absent, he sent Sully to deceive her into submission. The count, meanwhile seemed resolved to show himself thoroughly unworthy of her, and in 1595, he deliberately deserted Henry, and carried away his troop of men on the eve of the battle of Fontaine-française. In relating the events of the battle to Catherine, Henry merely alluded to this treachery by saying,

"Ceux qui ne s'y sont pas trouvés y doivent avoir bien du regret. This long, strange love-story had been drawn out over eight years, and it was clear it would only be concluded by Catherine's marriage with another of her many suitors, and so it was ended soon after this; but we have brought the history of her life to this date in order that by showing what was her conduct to her brother as King of France, and to her people, as she considered the whole Calvinist body, during those same years, it may be seen how self-sacrificing she was, and how unflinching in the performance of her duty to both.

There can be no question that she was sure of Henry's sympathy in all her endeavours to obtain concessions for the Calvinists, for whatever creed Henry professed, he was always in principles Protestant, and in practice tolerant. Probably he would not have been a Catholic had there been for him any alternative but to be a Calvinist; but in the latter half of the sixteenth century there were no alternatives, as there seemed to be in the early part of it, when men hoped to secure reform within the church by protesting. By the time Catherine had begun to "reason on the rules of her duty," she could only "begin her care to observe them" by adhering to the Geneva church, which was the rival church in France; and great credit is due to Catherine that, when she did so, she avoided making herself the head of a rival party in the country. When Catholic France was triumphing in Henry's recantation, she openly received the sacrament and gathered round her a crowd of leading Protestants to what we should now call "prayer-meetings" in the Louvre. The Cardinal de Gondi (he who said that he would not *faire le dévot* because he did not feel sure he could keep it up,) remonstrated with Henry on his permitting such practices; Catherine was called from the pulpit, the French Jezebel; the people were set to complain that she gave food to the starving on fast days; and she could not cross the galleries of the Louvre without seeing insulting pasquinades affixed to the walls. She bore all this in silence, for she was quietly labouring to bring about a reconciliation between the churches, and for two years she toiled to procure for the Calvinists a recognition of their rights as French subjects, and Henry began to feel that some such concessions only could save him from a new religious war. In 1598, he promulgated, at Nantes, the celebrated edict which secured to France the enlightened and industrious population that a century later its revocation scattered over England, Holland, and Westphalia.

And now Catherine would have returned to end her life in peace at Béarn, to which she clung as her home. "*Faites mes recommandations à mon cabinet et à mon allée,*" she had written not long before to the viceroy at Pau, but Henry ordered otherwise; she was to be married, and to the Catholic Duke de Bar, son of the Duke of Lorraine. "*La sœur du roi de France était soumise, mais la fille Calviniste de Jeanne d'Albret demeura indépendante,*" and so independent, that when she was induced to sign the marriage-contract, Henry had to declare, as he put the pen in her hand, that he used no constraint, "*ni audit mariage ni à être*

Catholique." She said, however, that she would receive instructions in the orthodox faith, and accordingly, being ill, she lay in bed and listened to two divines in turn till she was tired. Catholic and Calvinist clergy opposed the marriage without effect.

At five o'clock on a January morning, in 1599, Henry, having sent for his natural brother the Archbishop of Rouen, and summoned the Duke de Bar and his father, fetched Catherine from her apartments to the hall where these guests were assembled, and addressing the archbishop said, "*Mon frère, je désire que vous fassiez tout actuellement ledit mariage de ma sœur et M. le Duc de Bar.*" The prelate murmured something about the canons. "*Ma présence est plus que toutes les solennités ordinaires, et mon cabinet, rempli de tant de personnes de qualité, est un lieu sacré et assez public pour cela,*" was Henry's rejoinder. "*Après quoy le pauvre archevesque n'eut pas la force de résister,*" and the ceremony was performed.

The first year of this marriage, we can see from Catherine's letters, was very happy; but her husband, Catholic as he was, was soon made to feel keenly his false position, for it was in no sense even a legal marriage. In the first year of the seventeenth century there was a solemn jubilee at Rome, and he presented himself there to obtain pontifical Absolution, and if possible the dispensation needful to allow a marriage within the prohibited degrees. Clement the Eighth was lenient, said at first he would go himself and try and convert Catherine, but deputed some very learned and very eloquent theologians to undertake the task, advising the duke at the same time to remove from his wife any very Protestant attendants; but Anne de Rohan was present throughout these ineffectual conferences, and she was the staunchest of Calvinists. Henry became irritated at Catherine's resisting these arguments. "*Sire,*" said she, "*ils veulent que je croye que notre mère est damnée.*" Henry turned aside to the duke and said with tears in his eyes, "*C'en est assez, mon frère; je renonce à la dompter, c'est à vous d'y essayer.*" But of her husband's efforts Catherine had already said, "*Il me dit sa peine avec tant d'amoureux paroles, qu'à toute heure j'ai les yeux pleins de larmes, mais pourtant bien résolue de vivre et mourir en la crainte de Dieu.*" She became very ill in 1603: never robust, many long-drawn-out anxieties had worn away her constitution, and she suffered from protracted headaches, sometimes lasting fourteen months at a time. In December of that year, nine Cardinals and four councillors, appointed by the Pope to consider the question of the marriage, agreed to a form of dispensation which his Holiness, worked on by Henry and the Duke of Lorraine, appealed to entreatingly by Catherine herself, at last accorded to her: "*Croyez, mon roy,*" she said to Henry, "*que je suis la plus heureuse et la plus contente femme qui vive;*" but it was too late for ease of mind to restore her to health, and she was rapidly fading away, sometimes catolhing at the delusive hopes held out by a new doctor, sometimes fancying she gained strength by drinking water from her native mountains in Béarn, listening to the prayers of her Calvinist attendants, and letting her husband offer prayers for her to the Virgin—and so she died in February, 1604.

The Ceremonies of the Jewish Religion.

MONTESQUIEU has written, in his *Esprit des Loix*, that "a religion burdened with many ceremonies attaches man to it more strongly than a religion which has but few, from a natural propensity to things in which we are continually employed," and to the many ceremonies attached to the observance of the Jewish religion may be ascribed in a great measure that steadfast adherence to the faith which so pre-eminently characterizes the Hebrew nation.

But what is the origin of the Jewish religion, and what were the distinguishing features which separated it from the religions of the whole world? Abraham is recognized as the father and progenitor of the nation; but those peculiar rites and ceremonies which are the substantial portion of the faith were instituted by Moses, who may be regarded as the founder of the principles of the Jewish religion as now recognized.

Moses was brought up and educated as an Egyptian priest: hence the influence he possessed at the court of Pharaoh; he did not even follow the then principles of the Israelitish faith—as we find years after his marriage with Zipporah he had not initiated his first-born into the Abrahamic covenant. The religion of the Egyptians consisted of symbolical worship. In the earliest periods they had no idea of the nature of the supreme Power, but used to pay adoration to the sun and stars. The sun lights the earth and gives warmth and nourishment to all things. Again, the Egyptians, being an agricultural nation, observed that the annual renewal of the productions of the earth and the natural features of the country were indicated by the rising and setting of certain stars: for instance, the annual overflow of the Nile was indicated by the appearance of a very beautiful star towards the source of the river, which seemed to warn them against being taken by surprise, as a dog by barking gives notice of approaching danger: hence they called this star the "Sirius," or "Dog Star." In the same manner the stars which appeared when the river began to overflow were called the "Stars of Aquarius;" stars of the "Taurus or Bull," those under which it was necessary to plough the earth with oxen; stars of the "Cancer or Crab," those which appeared when the sun, having reached the bounds of the tropic, returned backwards and sideways like a crab; stars of the "Leo or Lion," those which appeared when the lions, drawn by thirst from the desert, appeared on the banks of the Nile; stars of the "Libra or Balance," when the days and nights, being of equal length, maintain an equilibrium; stars of the "Scorpio or Scorpion," those which appeared when certain winds brought a burning vapour like the poison of the scorpion; and so on through the various signs of the Zodiac, and the various

mysterious figures which identify the stars on the celestial globe. These stars were their great warners, and their "signs for seasons, for days, and years;" and as, according to the Egyptian belief, they were constantly watching over their destiny and warning them of coming events, so in process of time they were regarded as deities and worshipped. In the course of events, however, the people, who knew at what time of the year the natural features of the country would occur from experience of prior years, omitted to regulate these periods by observation of the skies, and so forgot the motive which led to the adoption of these signs. The result followed that the symbols, instead of the signs they were intended to denote, were worshipped, and invested with the attributes of the stars. They prayed to the bull for a plentiful harvest—to the scorpion not to pour out his venom upon nature. They revered the crab, the ram, the calf, and the serpent as gods, which originally only served as the symbols of the various ordinations of creation.

The religion which Moses first taught, and then different to all religions in existence, was the abolition of *all* symbolical worship, and the adoration of a Deity which constituted all things. There was only *ONE* such power, whose name was Jehovah, and should be worshipped without emblems.

To continually impress the Israelites with the wonders God had worked for them, Moses ordained that all the miracles which occurred during their wanderings in the desert should be perpetually celebrated throughout their generations. Fearful that they might forget the commandments which had been given them, he adopted signs to continually impress these commandments upon their recollection, and framed certain doctrines for their social and domestic regulation, that they might be kept distinct from the contamination of surrounding nations, and by these means establish themselves as a distinct people on the face of the earth. These festivals, signs, and doctrines, then, are the substance of the Jewish religion, and are particularly described in the Jewish laws.

The laws of the Jews are the written and the oral laws, corresponding with the *lex scripta* and the *lex non scripta* of the English law. The written law consists of the commandments written in the Bible given by Moses to the children of Israel, and the oral law of explanations thereof and rules of guidance ordained by Moses and taught by him to the Sanhedrim, or great senate of the nation. The oral law is contained in certain books called the *Mishna*, the *Gemara*, and the *Talmud*. The *Mishna* was originally delivered by tradition in short sentences and aphorisms; this was afterwards written with certain comments and expositions, which together formed the *Gemara*, which means "the complement," because the law is there fully explained. The *Mishna* is the text, the *Gemara* the comment. The *Talmud* comprises both these works, with the opinions of the various rabbis and doctors propounded and decided.

The most profound veneration is paid to the written laws of Moses. The Israelites were thus commanded in Deuteronomy: "And thou shalt

bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes; and thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates." This commandment is followed literally: four sections from the Pentateuch are written on parchment and enclosed in a small leather case, called the *phylacteries*, which are bound round the left arm by a leathern thong, and a leather case is bound round the head, similarly, for frontlets. The *phylactery* is placed on the left arm, near the heart, as a token that the heart and soul should be devoted to the service of the Supreme; and the *phylactery* for the forehead is placed just where the hair begins to grow on that part of the head which is opposite the brain, to show that the imagination and the whole of the senses which are there seated, should be devoted to the service of the Most High. The *phylacteries* are laid on in the morning, immediately on rising, to show that the Israelite's first thought should be of his Maker. The sections from the law are in like manner written on parchment, and rolled up in cylindrical tubes, which are nailed to the posts of every house and the door-post of every room, in obedience to the commandment before referred to, in order that the Israelite might never enter a room, without being reminded by these tubes of his duty to God and to man. Again, as another guarantee that the commandments should not be forgotten, the children of Israel are commanded to wear fringes on the borders of their garments (Numbers xv. 37—40). This garment is in the shape of two square breast-cloths, joined together by two straps, one being placed as a cover on the breast, the other on the back, and the fringes are hid up in the corner in a curious manner. Four worsted threads are drawn through an eyelet-hole, and a double knot made; one of the threads is then knotted round the other seven times, and then another double knot is made; the same thread is then wound nine times round the others, then eleven times, and then thirteen times, between which respectively, there are double knots made in the same manner as the previous one. This fringe is symbolical: the five double knots are in remembrance of the five books of Moses; the ten single knots, in remembrance of the ten commandments; the seven knotted twists, that the Sabbath should be kept on the seventh day; the nine twists, as a memorial of the nine months of pregnancy; the eleven twists, in recollection of the eleven stars which revered Joseph in his dream; the thirteen knots, in remembrance of thirteen attributes of compassion in the Almighty enumerated by the sages, called the "*Sheloh Esry Middoth*;" the seven, nine, eleven, and thirteen knots together represent the forty days that Moses was on the mount to receive the ten commandments. There are knots made at the end of each thread to keep them from untwisting, lest thereby the whole of the numerical types might be unravelled. Thus, whether at home or abroad, the Jew is continually reminded of the precepts of his religion, that if in an unguarded moment he should be tempted to commit any evil he may look on the fringes of his garments, and recollect the commandments he is bound to obey.

The Jew is very particular to abstain from partaking of those foods which are enumerated in the Pentateuch as unclean. The method of killing cattle is peculiar, and is only performed by persons who have undergone an examination before the chief rabbi, and received a licence or certificate of due qualification. The ox or other quadruped is secured, and the windpipe cut through with a very sharp-edged long knife; no kind of pressure of the knife on the throat is allowed more than what is necessary. The upper end of the knife is first put to the throat, it is then pushed over to the lower part of the blade, the knife is then drawn back again and then forwards; no stoppage must occur during the operation; and if there appears to have been the slightest notch in the edge of the knife, the flesh of the beast cannot be eaten.

These ceremonies appear to the uninitiated very unnecessary and probably ridiculous, but like many others are capable of explanation founded on good sense. The Israelites are continually forbidden to eat the blood of an animal, "for in the blood is the life." If the beast were struck on the head, the blood, instead of flowing out, would stagnate in the veins, and could never be entirely drawn out. There is no method of killing which so totally removes the blood from the meat. If a notch were in the blade of the knife, the cut would not be clean; the notch would cause a *thrill* to pass through the beast, and consequently repel the blood again through the veins; and in fear that the blood might not be entirely drawn out, the flesh is forbidden.

Matrimonial unions are effected by the introduction of mutual friends. A Jew is only allowed to intermarry with one of his own religion; and in case he may be unacquainted with any Jewish lady suitable to his taste, he mentions his desire for marriage to some friend, who institutes inquiries on his behalf for a suitable connection, and procures both parties an introduction to each other, generally through the medium of a mutual acquaintance. The courtship ordinarily lasts but a few months. On the day appointed for the celebration of the nuptials, the bride and bridegroom are conducted to the place appointed for the ceremony, where they are stationed under a canopy supported by long poles. The bride and bridegroom both drink out of a glass of wine, over which a sanctification has been pronounced by the priest; and the bridegroom, putting a ring on the bride's finger, repeats: "Behold, thou art betrothed unto me with this ring, according to the rites of Moses and Israel." Some blessings are then said, and the bride and bridegroom again drink of the wine, after which the empty wine-glass is laid on the ground, and the bridegroom stamps on and breaks it. Various reasons have been assigned for this ceremony, one of which is to remind the married couple that they are only like brittle ware made of earth, glossy without and rough within; but a more likely interpretation is to remind them of death, to whose power frail mortals must yield, sooner or later. The ceremony being over, all present cry out "*Mazel Tour*," that is, "*May it turn out happily*."

Thus we see that all the previous ceremonies are merely symbolical,

whilst the great feature of Judaism consists in the total absence of all symbolical worship.

When an Israelite is dying, the last prayer he utters is the grand protestation of his faith that there is but *one* God. A person is always left to watch the corpse from the time of death to the day of interment, to guard it from all sorts of vermin, because that godly likeness, which was given to man at his creation, disappears after his dissolution ; and for that reason no vermin fear men after their death. When a near relative dies, the members of his immediate family rend their garments about a hand's breadth, and the rent is not sewn up again. They also sit on the ground, and mourn for seven days ; and for the space of thirty days from the time of the death, the male relatives do not shave. The term of thirty days is taken from *Deuteronomy xxxiv. 8*.

The Jewish sages, in order to prevent the infringement or violation of any laws, have established a fence round them, by which anything which might possibly lead to the infringement of the law is itself interdicted. For example, the Jews are forbidden to *kindle* a fire on the Sabbath-day ; as a fence they are forbidden by the sages to *touch* the fire when kindled, or to lift a candlestick with a lighted candle in it, or even to *blow out* a candle, or extinguish a fire when kindled. The reason of the commandment to the Israelites not to kindle a fire on the Sabbath-day, has been explained in this way : When the children of Israel were wandering in the wilderness, the only method they had of kindling a fire was by rubbing two pieces of wood together until a flame was produced. This was a work requiring great exertion, and on account of being a labour, was forbidden on the Sabbath. But the sages forbid any such liberal construction, and follow the commandments literally, so that on account of the prohibition to light a fire on the Sabbath, no Jew smokes a cigar or pipe on that day. Some of the very strict Hebrews carry their religious formalities to an excess. They believe that carrying a handkerchief loose in the pocket, or a superfluous pin in the clothes, is carrying a burden, a work that should not be done on the Sabbath-day. But if they pin the handkerchief to the pocket, or tie it round the waist like a girdle, there is then no harm, as it may be considered a part of the garments. They will not gather any fruit from a tree on the Sabbath, although for their own immediate eating. But if they can get at the fruit with their teeth, they may *bite* off as much as they wish. They will not meddle with any tool, nor write nor sign their names on the Sabbath, nor ride on horseback, nor go by water, nor play on a musical instrument, nor bathe, nor tear, nor break anything, not even a hair, for which reason a very strict Jew will not suffer his hair to be combed on the Sabbath.

In the present day, however, many of these rules are unobserved. The principles of the Jewish faith are not impressed on the rising generation with the same strictness as in former years, and many of the strict rules are looked upon with ridicule, because their meaning is not explained, or, if explained, the reasons are not satisfactory to the inquiring

spirit of the day. It is within the knowledge of the writer of this article that Jewish young men have over and over again inquired the reason for observing certain religious ceremonies; but there are few who can give a satisfactory explanation, and the answer returned is, "Your father, your grandfather, and your great grandfather observed these customs, therefore you must do the same." This is no explanation suitable to an intelligent mind in the present day. It is one of the greatest tests of the philosophical mind when it thinks for itself. The result is that young men do not think for themselves; and these customs appearing unintelligible, are often unobserved. Jewish youths are sent to the universities, and receive a classical education, whilst they are ignorant of the very principles of their religion; not one in a hundred ever reads the Talmud, where these customs and ceremonies are explained; and though all the prayers are recited in Hebrew, a Jewish youth who can read his *Télémaque* or *Molière's* plays at eight, who can translate his *Homer*, and knows his Latin grammar by heart, cannot decline a Hebrew noun, or conjugate a Hebrew verb.

There have been many maxims laid down by the sages which are not universally received. Some of the ancient Jewish literature in the present day appears rather singular. In the Hagoda, or Passover service, there is a curious specimen of logic. Rabbi Jose asks, "Whence art thou authorized to assert that in Egypt the Egyptians were afflicted with ten plagues, whilst on the borders of the Red Sea they were smitten with fifty plagues?" "Because in Egypt the magicians said to Pharaoh, 'This is the finger of God;' but at the Red Sea it says, 'And Israel saw the mighty hand wherewith the Lord smote the Egyptians.' If by the finger only they received ten plagues, they must of course (?) have received fifty by the hand, as it contains five fingers." (?) This argument is not quite so palpable as an axiom of Euclid. Here is a specimen of logic not to be found in Whately. The Jews think it meritorious to make three meals on the Sabbath-day, because in Exodus xvi. 25, it says, "And Moses said, Eat that *to-day*, for *to-day* is the Sabbath of the Lord; *to-day* ye shall not find it in the field." In this sentence the word *day* is mentioned three times; hence the rabbins infer it is meritorious to make three meals on the Sabbath.

Of the many beliefs which are current in the Hebrew nation, but not credited by those in whose minds there is one spark of enlightenment, we will select a few for illustration.

All dreams come to pass according to the interpretation that is made of them by the person to whom they are revealed; consequently, dreams should only be told to friends (what a fortune to realise as a *favourable* interpreter of dreams!) An apparition has power to become visible and to injure any particular person who may happen to be by himself in the dark. If two persons be together, an apparition may become visible but cannot hurt either, but if three persons be together, no apparition can be visible; if, however, there be one candle alight, it is a safeguard against all evil spirits. What an apparition consists of, and why it should injure

any one, does not appear. Evil spirits rest on all heaps of rubbish, and, therefore, it is dangerous to tread on all such. There is also a belief in witches and their power to injure any one who flings away the tops of green turnips or carrots without untying them. Some of the Jews wear a sort of charm about them consisting of a few cabalistic words written on parchment by a rabbi. There are numerous other spiritual beliefs not taught by the religion of Moses, and evidently the result of ignorance and its natural offspring, superstition, which are generally credited amongst the Jews of Poland and Germany, but the superior education and enlightenment of the English Jew teaches him the folly of superstition. Formerly, when a man was married he used, at the marriage ceremony, to walk round his intended wife three times to see if she really were the right woman he proposed to take as a wife, because of the deceit practised on Jacob by Laban, who first married his son-in-law to his eldest daughter, Leah, under the assurance that it was his daughter Rachel; but such ceremonies are no longer in existence, the English Jew uniting with his religion a spirit of enlightenment and liberalism. The present Jewish belief is vastly different to the religion taught the Israelites by Moses; there have been many innovations through contact with the many nations amongst whom the Jews sojourned, and many of the beliefs of those nations have been imbibed and are now recognized principles of Judaism. The belief in the angels and archangels "Gabriel," "Michael," and "Ariel," was not taught by Moses, but, together with the Jewish months, Nisan, Adar, Yar, &c., came from Babylon. The immortality of the soul was unknown to the Hebrews until their intercourse with the Assyrians. The "Urim and Thummim" of the breastplate of the high-priest, the serpent made by Moses and exhibited to the people, the brazen sea of the Temple upon twelve brazen oxen, the cherubim of the ark, and numerous symbols of the ancient Jewish worship, are all derived from the ancient Egyptians, and were comprised in the mysteries of their religion, which Moses learnt as an Egyptian priest, and then taught the children of Israel in the wilderness.

What was the Jewish religion at the time the Israelites were slaves in Egypt? There were no festivals to observe until they wandered in the wilderness, and Moses ordained those festivals should be kept as a lasting memorial. There were no prohibitions against any particular kinds of foods. There were none of the ceremonies and laws which Moses afterwards instituted. In what did their religion differ from the Egyptians', that the Israelites were always a distinct race? Simply in the absence of *symbolical* worship. In other respects their religion was the same as the Egyptians'; and it was only a corrected form of their religion that Moses afterwards taught the Israelites, which he himself had learned as an Egyptian priest. But from the religion Moses taught, sprung nearly all the religions of the civilized world.

To Esther.

No. II.

"Do you remember the story I wrote you in 1860, when I came back from Rome? * To complain was a consolation, when it was to you I complained. I was lonely enough and disappointed, and yet I have been more unhappy since. Then I thought that at least you were happy, but later they said it was not so, and bitterness and regret overpowered me for a time. But this was after I had written to you.

"I scarcely remember what I said now, it is so long ago, but I know every word had a meaning since you were to see it, and the Esther I wrote to, the Esther whose image was for ever before me, seemed mine sometimes though we were for ever parted. I have often thought that the Esther I loved loved me though the other one married Halbert. Perhaps you were only her semblance, and she was waiting for me elsewhere in a different form. But the familiar face with the sallow cheeks and dark brows, and all the sudden light in it, comes before me as I write even now. I have seen it a thousand thousand times since we parted by the Trinità; do you remember when the bell was ringing for matins? Only as years have gone by the lines have faded a little, the eyes look deep and tender, but they have lost their colour; though I know how the lights and the smiles still come and still go, I cannot see them so plainly. The woman herself I can conjure across the years and the distance, but the face does not start clear-set before me as in those days when I only lived to follow your footsteps, to loiter among the shadows in your way, and the sunshine through which you seemed to move; to drink in the sweet tones of your voice, to watch you when you sat at your window, when you lingered in the silent Italian gardens, or moved with a gentle footfall along echoing galleries, with dim golden pictures, and harmonies of glowing colour all about you.

"What sea-miles and land-miles, what flying years and lagging hours, what sorrows and joys lie between us—and joys separate more surely than sorrows do. People scale prison walls, they wade through rivers, they climb over arid mountains, to rejoin those whom they love, but the great barriers of happiness and content, who has surmounted them?

"I say this, and yet success has been mine since I saw you. Many good things have come to me for which I did not greatly care, but though the spring tides and bright summers and the bitter winter winds and autumnal mists were fated to part us year after year, yet it also seemed destined

* See *Cornhill Magazine* for January, 1862.

that I should love you faithfully through all — that even forgetfulness should not prevent it, that disappointment should not embitter, that indifference should not chill. What I have borne from you I could not have endured from any other. Once, long before I knew you, a woman spoke to me hastily, and I left her, and could not forgive her for years, and sometimes I ask myself is my ill-luck a judgment upon me.

"I who was so impatient once and hard of heart, make no merit of my long affection for you, Esther: it was simply fate, and I could not resist it. Changing, unchanging, faithful, unfaithful, who can account for his experiences? Does mistrust bring about of itself that which it imagines? Is *everything* there that we fancy we see in people? Often I think that fallen as we are, and weary and soiled by the wayside dust and mud, and the many cares of life, some gleam of the divine radiance is ours still, and to those who love us best it is given to see it. That the sweetness and goodness and brightness we had fancied are no fancies, but truth. True though clouds and darkness come between us, and the mortal parts cannot always apprehend the divine.

"Love is blind; indifference sees more clearly people say, and I wonder if this can be true; for my part I think it is the other way. I have sometimes asked about you from one and from another, and people have spoken of you as if you were to me only what they are, what I am to them, or they to you. I seem to be writing riddles and ringing the changes upon the words which you will not see. Whether you see them or not what does it matter, you would not understand their meaning, their sorrowful fidelity, nor do I wish that you should.

"For, as I have said, years have passed, other thoughts and ties and interests have come to me; I am sometimes even vexed and wearied by my own unchanging nature, and I am tired of the very things from which I cannot tear myself away. I don't think I care for you now, though I still love the woman who jilted me years ago upon the Pincio. It might be that seeing you again all the old tender emotion of feeling would revive towards you. It might be that you would wound me a second time by destroying my dreams, my ideal remembrance; very sad, very sweet, very womanly and trustful my remembrance is. I should imagine you must have hardened—improved as people call it—since then, and been moulded into some different person. Six years spent with Halbert must have altered you, I think, and marred the sweet imperfections of your nature. At any rate you are as far removed from me as if poor Halbert were alive still to torment you.

"This morning at Luchon my courier brought me a letter which interested me oddly enough, and brought back all the old fancies and associations. It came from my cousin's wife, Lady Mary. There were but a few lines, but your name was written thrice in it, and like an old half-remembered tune, all the way riding along the rough road I have been haunted by a refrain—'Meet Esther again, shall it be, can it be?'—fitting to a sort of rhythm, which is sing-singing in my head at this instant.

"For want of a companion to speak to, I have written this nonsense at length. I cannot talk to my courier except to swear at the roads. They narrowed and roughened as we got into Spain, after we had crossed a bridge with a black river rushing beneath it. High up in the mountains, the villages perched like eagles' lairs; the streams were dashing over the rocks in the clefts below. This is not a golden and sun-painted land like the country we have been used to. Italy seems like summer as I think of it, and this is like autumn to me. The colours have sombre tints; there are strange browns and yellows, faded greens with deep blue shades in them. Stones roll from the pathway and fall crashing into the ravines below. No roads lead to the villages where the people live for a lifetime, tilling their land, weaving their clothes, tending their cattle; many of them never coming down into the valley all their lives long, sufficing to themselves and ignoring the world at their feet. So my guides have told me at least, and it was their business to know. . . ."

All this had been written on the rail of a balcony to the jangling of a church bell and the sympathetic droning of a guitar with one note. It was played by a doleful-looking soldier in flight regimentals, sitting upright on a chair on the landing-place, and never moving a muscle, while the flies buzzed about his head. A motionless companion sat near listening to the melody. Presently, in the midst of his writing, Geoffry Smith, who had scarcely heeded the guitar or the bell, suddenly heard a great chattering and commotion in the street below, and looking over the rail, he saw a crowd of little gipsy children swarming in front of the house. They were trying to climb up into the balcony, getting on one another's backs, clapping their hands, screaming and beckoning to him:—"Mossoo! Mossoo!—tit sou—allons donc!" with an encouraging gesture. "Tit sou—'lons donc—vite, *Mossoo!*" and the brown faces grinned beneath their little Moorish-looking turbans—yellow, green, scarlet handkerchiefs; and all the brown bare legs went capering. The narrow street was crowded with people hurrying to the call of the church bell. Women came out of the low doorways of their houses, adjusting their mantillas. Rosina tripped by with the duenna. Don Basilio strode past with flapping skirts, pantomime-like cocked hat, cotton umbrella and all. Smith looked at them all from over his balcony, like from a box at the opera. At the other end of the place—*Plaza de la Constitucion* its name was—the French Consul, leaning over his eagle, was sleepily smoking a cigar and watching the church-goers pass by. Strum tumty, strum tumty—tumty strum, went the guitar, and presently—still like a scene at the play—the light darkened, the people looked up at the sky, and there came an artificial clap of thunder from the hill-top over the town, with a sudden storm of hail and lightning. Rosina set off scampering with her duenna. So did the priests; the young men with their bright red caps, lounging at the corner of the street; the old man with his donkey; and the little grinning beggar-children.

Smith thought he too should like to see the inside of the church, which seemed to be looked upon as a safe refuge, for everybody appeared to be rushing in its direction. He had not very far to go: up a short street, and along the Plaza, and then crossing a little wooden drawbridge, Smith found himself at the church door. He stooped and went in through a low Moorish-looking arch, and descended a short flight of black marble steps which led down into the aisle.

It seemed quite dark at first, except that the tapers were flaring at the altar, where three unprepossessing-looking priests were officiating. By degrees Smith found that he was standing in a beautiful old Templar church, with arches, with red silk hangings, and a chequered marble floor, and a dark carved gallery from which some heads were peeping. The women were sitting and squatting on the floor with their shoes neatly ranged at their sides and their babies dandling in their arms. The men were behind, nearer the door; and in the front row of all, grinning, showing their teeth, and plucking at his legs as he went by, Smith discovered the little company of persecuting boys and girls, pretending to bury their faces in their hands when he looked at them sternly, and peeping at him through their wiry little fingers with shining malicious eyes.

The service came to an end; the storm passed away. Smith left the church with the children swarming at his heels, and found his guide waiting with the horses ready harnessed. They had no time to lose the man said—the bill was paid. Smith sprang into the saddle, flung a handful of halfpence to the Moorish little bandits, and rode off as hard as he could go along the rough bridle-path.

It was very late before he got back. He dined by himself about ten o'clock, with a tired, short-sleeved waiter to attend upon him, and then he went and sat under the trees on the Cours, listening to the music and trying to make up his mind. Should he go to Bigorre? Yes; no; un peu; beaucoup; pas du tout. He changed his plans over and over again. About midnight, when the music and the lights were still alive, the people still drinking their coffee and lemonade in the soft starlit night, and chatting and humming all round about, Smith determined at last that he would stay for a day or two longer, and then go to Tarbes and on to Marseilles and to Italy. Having made out this scheme, he called a voiturier with a whip and jack-boots who happened to be passing, and asked him if he was engaged and what was his fare to St. Bertrand. Smith had a fancy to see the old place, which lies on the road to Tarbes. It also lies on the road to Bigorre, but Smith thought that he did not remember this. The guide was a Bigorre man and anxious to get there. He was willing enough to go to St. Bertrand. After that he should like to get home he said. His horses wanted a rest. Smith came to a compromise with him at last. The tired horses were to take him to St. Bertrand, and then they were to make further arrangements.

Two roads cross the country which divides Luchon from Bigorre

One runs direct in noble undulations over hill-tops and mountain ranges. It goes bursting over the great Col d'Aspin, from whence you may see the world like a sea, tossing and heaving at your feet, and trembling with the light upon a thousand hills ; and then it runs down and plunges into deep valleys, where the air is scented with pine-wood.

The other road winds by the plain and follows the course of a flowing river, past villages sun-decked and vine-wreathed, but silent and deserted in their whiteness. A sad-faced woman looks from her cottage-door ; a dark-headed boy comes skimming over the stones with his naked feet, and holds up his hand for alms ; a traveller, resting on a heap by the dusty road-side, nods his head in token of weary fellowship. At last, as you still follow the road in the valley, with the low range on either side, you suddenly reach a great hill with the towers of a strong city rising from its summit. It dominates the land-waves, which seem flowing down from the mountains and the great flat marshes which stretch away to the sea.

Smith chose the flat road to return by, wishing, as I have said, to see St. Bertrand : he had crossed the mountain before, in the course of his travels. He went rolling along through the fresh morning air, with his head full of old sights and thoughts—very far away, bankings and fancies which he had imagined safely buried in the Campagna or mouldering away with the relics of his old Italian sight-seeing times. Along the banks of the river, crossing and recrossing many times from one side to another, through plains and sunny villages, they had come at last to St. Bertrand, the city on the hill. The driver, a surly fellow, hissed and cursed as the horses went stumbling up the steep ascent, straining and slipping in the blazing sun over bleached white stones. There were four bony horses, ornamented with bells and loaded with heavy harness. Smith reclined at his ease among the fusty cushions of the carriage ; his courier clung nervously to the narrow railing on the box ; Pierre, the driver, cracked his long whip, muttered horrible oaths between his teeth, gulped, choked, shrieked, with hideous jerks and sounds. Everything seems to grow whiter and brighter as they mount. They reach the town at last : there is an utter silence and look of abandonment ; flowers are hanging over the walls and gables and postern gates. They pass fountains of marble, stone casements, and turrets and balconies, all white, blazing, deserted, with geraniums hanging and flowering. They pass under an archway with carvings and emblazonments throwing deep shadows, by strange gables and corners and turrets, up a fantastic street. It was like a goblin city, so dreary, silent, deserted, with such strange conceits and ornaments at every corner.

The hotel was empty, too : one demure, sour visage came to the door to receive them. Yes, there was food prepared ; the horses could be put up in the stables. A human voice seemed to break the enchantment, for I think until then Smith had almost expected to find a sleeping princess upon a bed, a king, a queen, a court, all dressing and drowsing inside this

ancient palace : for the inn had been a palace, at some time or other perhaps inhabited by the ancient Bishops of St. Bertrand, or by some of the nobles whose escutcheons still hang on the gates of the city. There were two tables, both laid and spread in readiness, in the solemn old dining-room, with its white painted panels and carved chimney. Smith was amused to see a Murray lying on the white cloth nearest the window. Even here, in this forgotten end of the world, the wandering tribes of Britain had hoisted the national standard and hastened to secure the best place at the feast. There were three plates, three forks, three knives. Smith, dimly pursuing his morning fancy, and bewitched by the unreality and silence of all about him, thought that this was the place in which he should like to meet Esther again—if he was ever to meet her. Here, in this white blinding silence, she might come like an apparition out of his dreams—come up the steep mediæval street, past the fountain—with her long dress,—how well he remembered it,—rippling over the stones, her slim straight figure standing in relief against the blazing sky. . . . “Cutlets—yes ; and a chicken ; and a bottle of St. Julien.” . . . This was to the waiting-woman, who asked him what he would like.

Geoffry walked out into the garden to wait until his cutlets should be ready, and he found an unkept wilderness, tangled and sweet with autumnal roses, and a carved stone terrace or loggia, facing a great beautiful landscape. As he leaned against the marble parapet, Smith, who still thought he was only admiring the view, imagined Esther walking up the street, coming nearer and nearer, approaching along the tangled walk through the rose-trees, and standing beside him at last on the terrace. It was a fancy, nothing more ; it was not even a presentiment ; all the beautiful world below shimmered and melted into greater and greater loveliness ; an insect went flying and buzzing over the parapet and out into the clear atmosphere ; a rose fell to pieces, and as the leaves tumbled to the ground one or two floated upon the yellow time-worn ledge against which Smith was leaning. No, he would not go to Bigorre ; he said to himself he would turn his horses' heads or travel on beyond Bigorre, to some other mountain—to the Luz or St. Sauveur, or farther still, to Eaux Bonnes, in the heart of the Pyrenees. He pulled out his letter and read it again ; this was all it said, in Lady Mary's cramped little hand :—

B. de Bigorre.

DEAR GEOFFREY—Some one has seen you somewhere in the Pyrenees ; will you not take Bigorre on your way, and come and spend a few days with us ? It would cheer my husband up to see you ; his cough is troublesome still, though he is greatly better than when we left the rectory. There are one or two nice people in the place. I am sure you would spend a few pleasant days. We have the three Vulliamays, Mr. and Mrs. Penton, and Olga Halbert ;—that poor Mrs. Halbert, too, is with them ; her children make great friends with ours. Mrs. Halbert tells us she knows you. She is very much altered and shaken by her husband's death, though one cannot but feel that it must be more a shock than a sorrow to her, poor woman. The Pentons and Mrs. Halbert are at the hotel. She says they find it comfortable. I know you like being independent best, otherwise we have a nice little room for you, and should

much prefer having you with us while you stay. The children are flourishing, and I expect my sister Lucy to join us in a few days. Do try and come, and give us all a great deal of pleasure.

Affectionately yours,

MARY SMITH.

P.S.—I shall send this to St. James's Place on the chance that it may be forwarded back again to you with your other letters.

Smith read the letter and tore it up absently, and threw it on the ground. He would not go to Bigorre; he was past the age of sentiment; he would never marry; he did not want to see Esther again and destroy his remembrance of her, or make a fool of himself perhaps, and be bound to a woman hardened by misfortune, by long contact with worldly minds, by devotion to an unworthy object. How could she prefer Halbert to me? Smith thought, with an amused self-consciousness. Esther was a clever woman: she had thought for herself; she needed a certain intellectual calibre of companionship. Halbert cultivated his whiskers: his best aspirations were after Lady X and Y and Z and their tea-parties; and then Smith wandered away from poor Halbert, who was gone now, to the lovely sight before him.

It was not so much the view as the beautiful fires which were lighting it up. If colour was like music—if one could write it down, and possess for good—the gleams of sudden sweetness, the modulation, the great bursting symphonies of light thrilling from a million notes at once into one great triumphal harmony: if the passion of loveliness—I know no better word—which seems all about us at times, could be written down, one would need words that should change and deepen and sweeten with the reader's mood, and shift for ever into combinations lovely and yet more lovely.

Smith was looking still with a heart full of gratitude and admiration, when he heard a step upon the gravel walk. He turned round to see who was coming. Was this an enchanted city he had come to? A tall slim figure of a woman in black robes advanced along the gravel walk and came to the overhanging terrace where he was standing. Alas! it was no enchantment. The genii had not brought his princess on their wings. It was no one he had ever seen before—no sallowness with the sweet bright look in it; it was only a handsome-looking young woman, one of the thousands there are in the world, with peach-red cheeks and bright keen eyes, who glanced at him suspiciously. Two great black feathers were hanging from her hat; her long silk gown rippled in the sunshine and her black silk cloak was fastened round her neck by a silver clasp.

It was a very charming apparition, Smith thought, though it was not the one he had hoped for—there was nothing gracious about this well-grown young lady. This was no Esther—this was not a woman who would change her mind a dozen times a day, who would be weak and foolish and trustful always. Geoffrey was half repelled, half attracted by the keen determined face, the firm-moulded lines. He might not have

thought twice about her at another time; but in this golden solitude and Garden of Eden it almost seemed as if a companion was wanted. He had been contented enough until now with a shadowy friend of his own exorcising. The lady in black, after looking at the view for a second, turned round and walked away again as deliberately as she had come, and he presently followed her example for want of something better to do. The hills were still melting, roses were flushing and scenting the air, insects floating as before; but Smith, whose train of thought had been disturbed, turned his back upon all their loveliness and strolled into the house to ask if his breakfast was ready.

Prim-face, who was busy at a great carved cupboard, seemed amazed at the question. "You have not seen the cathedral yet: travellers always go over the cathedral before the *déjeuner*. We have had to catch and kill the fowl," in an aggrieved tone. "Encore vingt minutes n'est-ce pas, Auguste!" shrieks the woman suddenly, without budging from her place.

"Vingt minutes," repeats a deep voice from somewhere or other behind the great cupboard, and there was no more to be said on the subject.

Smith spent the twenty minutes during which his chicken was grilling and his potatoes frizzling, in a great lofty cathedral. It stands on the very summit of the hill, high above the town and the surrounding plains—wide flights lead to the great entrance, the walls and roof are bare, but of beautiful and generous proportions: lofty arches vault high overhead. The sunshine, which seems weird and goblin in the city, falls here with a more solemn light: slant gleams flit across the marble pavement as the great door swings on its hinges and footfalls echo in the distance. Smith seemed to recognize the place somehow—it looked familiar: the rough beautiful arches, the vastness, the desertion; no priests, no one praying, no glimmer of shrines and candles; only space, silence, light from the large window, only a solemn figure of an abbot lying upon his marble bed with a date of three hundred years ago.

Smith remembered dreaming of such a place in his old home years and years before, when he was a boy, and had never even heard Esther's name. The abbot on his marble bed seemed familiar, the placid face, the patient hands, the dog crouching at his feet. A great gleam of sun from a window overhead streaked and lighted the marble. Smith sat down on the step of the tomb and looked up at the great window. A white pigeon with a beautiful breast shining in the sun was sitting upon the mullion. It sat for a time, and then it flew away with a sudden rush across the violet blue sky. Smith did not move, but waited in a tranquil, gentle frame of mind, like that of a person who is dreaming beautiful dreams, nor had waited very long when he seemed to be conscious of people approaching, voices and footsteps coming nearer and nearer, until at last they were somewhere close at hand, and he overheard the following uninteresting conversation between two voices.

"Why don't they do it up with chints if they are so poor? chints costs next to nothing. I am sure that lily of the valley and ribbon

pattern in my dressing-room seems as if it never would wear out. I was saying to Hudson only the other day, 'Really, Hudson, I think while we are away you must get some new covers for my dressing-room.'

Here a second voice interrupted with—"Charles, do you remember any allusion to St. Bertrand in *Jamieson's Lives of the Saints*? I read the book very carefully, but I cannot feel quite certain."

To which the first voice rejoined—"Why, Olga, I do wonder you don't remember. I think Charles has a very bad memory indeed. And so have I; but *you* read so much."

Charles now spoke. "Here, Mira, look at this a-hm—a-interesting monument.—To the right, Mira, to the right. You are walking away from it."

"Dear me, Charles! what a droll creature. He puts me in mind of Uncle John."

"I cannot help thinking," Charles said impressively, "that this is the place Lady Kidderminster was describing at Axminster House. I am almost convinced of it."

"Why don't you ask *him*?" said the Olga voice; upon which Smith heard Charles saying rapidly and speaking his words all in a string as it were—

"Lady-Kidderminster-a-été-beaucoup-frappée-par-une-Cathédrale-dans-les-Pyrénées. Est-ce-qu'elle-a-passé-par-ici? . . . I am sure—I—a beg your pardon.—I had not perceived—" and a stout consequential-looking gentleman, who was in the middle of his sentence, stumbled over Smith's umbrella, while Smith, half amused, half provoked, rose from his seat and seemed to the speaker to emerge suddenly, red beard and all, from the tomb. Mira gave a little scream, Olga looked amused.

"I trust I have not seriously injured—a-hm!—anything," said the gentleman; "we were examining this—a-relic, and had not observed—" Smith made a little bow, and another to the beautiful apparition on the terrace, whom he recognized. Next to her was standing another very handsome youngish lady, stout, fair, and grandly dressed, who graciously acknowledged his greeting, while Olga slightly tossed her head, as was her way when she thought herself particularly irresistible. Behind them the curé was waiting—a sad, heavy-featured man, in thick country shoes, whose shabby gown flapped against his legs as he walked with his head wearily bent. He only shrugged his shoulders at the many questions which were put to him. Such as, Why didn't they put in stained glass windows? wasn't it very cold in winter? was he sure he didn't remember Lady Kidderminster? Leading the way, he opened a side door, through which Smith saw a beautiful old cloister, with a range of violet hills gleaming through the arches. It was unexpected, like a delightful surprise, and gave him a sudden thrill of pleasure.

"What a delightful place you have here," he said to the guide. "I think I should like to stay altogether."

"Not many people care to pass by this way now," said the curé. "It

is out of the road; they do not like to bring their horses up the steep ascent. Yes, it is a pretty point de vue. I come here of an evening sometimes."

"Extremely so," said Mira. "Olga, do you know I am so tired? I am convinced that I want bracing. I wish we had gone to Brighton instead of coming to this hot place.—Charles, do you think the 'déjeuner' is ready? I am quite exhausted," she went on, in the same breath.

"Would ces dames care to see the vestments?" the curate asked, a little wistfully, seeing them prepare to go.

"Oh-a-merci, we are rather pressed for time," Charles was beginning, when Smith saw that the man looked disappointed, and said he should like to see them. Olga, as they called her, shook out her draperies, and told Charles they might as well go through with the farce, and Mira meekly towered after her husband and sister. These are odious people, poor Smith thought. The ladies are handsome enough, but they are like About's description of his two heroines: "L'une était une statue, l'autre une poupée." This statue seemed always complacently contemplating its own pedestal. In the *sacristie* there were only one or two relics and vestments to be seen, and a large book open upon a desk.

"People sometimes," said the curé, humbly shuffling and looking shyly up, "inscribe their names in this book, with some slight donation towards the repairs of the church."

"I thought as much," said Olga, while Charles pompously produced his purse and began fumbling about. Smith was touched by the wistful looks of the guide. This church was his child, his companion, and it was starving for want of food. He wrote his name—"Mr. Geoffry Smith"—and put down a napoleon on the book, where the last entry was three months old, of two francs which some one had contributed. The others opened their eyes as they saw what had happened. The curé's gratitude and delight amply repaid Geoffry, who had more napoleons to spend than he could well get through. The pompous gentleman now advanced, and in a large, aristocratic hand inscribed,—“Mr. and Mrs. Penton, of Penton;” “Miss Halbert.” And at the same time Mr. Penton glanced at the name over his own, and suddenly gleamed into life, in that way which is peculiar to people who suddenly recognize a desirable acquaintance.

"Mr. Smith, I have often heard your name. You knew my poor brother-in-law, Frank Halbert, I believe.—Mrs. Penton—Miss Halbert.—A most curious and fortunate chance—hm-a!—falling in with one another in this out-of-the-way portion of the globe. Perhaps we may be travelling in the same direction? we are on our way to Bigorre, where we rejoin our sister-in-law, Mrs. Frank Halbert."

Geoffry felt as if it was the finger of Fate interfering. He followed, them mechanically out into the street.

"How hot the sun strikes upon one's head. Do you dislike it?—I do," said Mrs. Penton, graciously, as they walked back to the hotel together. . . .

People say that as they live on, they find answers in life to the problems and secrets which have haunted and vexed their youth. Is it so? It seems as if some questions were never to be answered, some doubts never to be solved. Right and wrong seem to change and blend as life goes on, as do the alternate hours of light and darkness. Perhaps some folks know right from wrong always and at all times. But there are others weak and inconsistent, who seem to live only to regret. They ask themselves with dismay, looking back at the past—Was that me myself? Could that have been me? That person going about with the hard and angry heart; that person uttering cruel and unforgiving words; that person thinking thoughts that my soul abhors? Poor Esther! Often and often of late her own ghost had come to haunt her, as it had haunted Smith—sometimes in a girlish guise, tender, impetuous, unworn and unsoiled, and unseared by the wayside wear, the thorns and the dust of life. At other times—as she could remember herself at one time of her life—foolish, infatuated, mad, and blind—oh, how blind! Her dream did not last very long; she awoke from it soon. It was not much of a story. She was a woman now. She was a girl when she first knew her husband, and another who she once thought would have been her husband. She had but to choose between them. That was all her story; and she took in her hand and then put away the leaden casket with the treasure inside, while she kept the glittering silver and gold for her portion.

Some there be that shadows kiss;
Some have but a shadow's bliss.

Poor Esther! her shadows soon fled, parted, deepened into night; and long sad years succeeded one another: trouble and pain and hardness of heart, and bitter, bitter pangs of regret; remorse of passionate effort after right, after peace, and cruel failures and humiliations. No one ever knew the life that Esther Halbert led for the six years after she married. Once in an agony of grief and humiliation she escaped to her stepmother with her little girl. Lady Fanny pitied her, gave her some luncheon, talked good sense. Old Colonel Olliver sneered, as was his way, and told his daughter to go home in a cab. He could not advise her remaining with him, and, in short, it was impossible.

"You married Frank with your eyes open," he said. "You knew well enough what you were about when you threw over that poor fellow Smith, as if he had been an old shoe; and now you must make the best of what you have. I am not going to have a scandal in the family, and a daughter without a husband constantly about the house. I'll talk to Halbert and see if matters can't be mended; but you will be disgraced if you leave him, and you are in a very good position as you are. Injured wife, patient endurance—that sort of thing—nothing could be better."

Esther, with steady eyes and quivering lips, slowly turned away as her father spoke. Lady Fanny, her stepmother, was the kindest of the two, and talked to her about her children's welfare, and said she would drive her back in her brougham. Poor Esther dazed, sick at heart;

she thought that if it were not for her Jack and her Prissa she would go away and never come back again. Ah, what a life it was; what a weary delusion, even for the happiest—even for those who obtained their heart's desire! She had a great burst of crying, and then she was better and said meekly, Yes, she would go home, and devote herself to her little ones, and try to bear with Frank. And she made a vow that she would complain no more, since this was all that came to her when she told her troubles to those who might have been a little sorry. Esther kept her vow. Was it her good angel that prompted her to make it? Halbert fell, out hunting, and was brought home senseless only a few days after, and Esther nursed him tenderly and faithfully: when he moaned, she forgave and forgot every pain he had ever inflicted upon her, every cruel word or doubt or suspicion. He never rallied; and the doctors looked graver and graver, until at last Frank Halbert died, holding his wife's hand in his.

The few first weeks of their married life, these last sad days of pain and suffering, seemed to her all that she had left to her; all the terrible time between she blotted out and forgot as best she could, for she would clutch her children suddenly in her arms when sickening memories overpowered her, and so forget and forgive at once. For some time Esther was shocked, shaken, nervous, starting at every word and every sound, but by degrees she gained strength and new courage. When she came to Bigorre she was looking better than she had done for years; and no wonder: her life was peaceful now, and silent; cruel sneers and utterances had passed out of it. The indignities, all the miseries of her past years, were over for ever; only their best blessings, Jack and Prissa, remained to her; and she prayed with all her tender mother's heart that they might grow up different from either of their parents, good and strong and wise and upright—unlike her, unlike their father.

The Pentons, who were good-natured people in their way, had asked her to come; and Esther, who was too lazy to say no, had agreed, and was grateful to them for persuading her to accompany them. She liked the place. The bells sounding at all the hours with their sudden musical cadences, the cheery stir, the cavalcades arriving from the mountains, the harnesses jingling, the country-folks passing and repassing, the convents tinkling, Carmes close at hand, Carmelites a little farther down the street,—the streams, the pretty shady walks among the hills, the pastoral valley where the goats and the cattle were browsing;—it was all bright and sunshine and charming. Little Prissa in her big sun-bonnet, and Jack helping to push the perambulator, went up every morning to the Salut, along a road with shady trees growing on either side, which led to some baths in the mountain. One day the children came home in much excitement, to say they had seen a horse in a chequed cotton dressing-gown, and with two pair of trousers on. But their greatest delight of all was the Spaniard of Bigorre with his pack. Esther soon grew horribly tired of seeing him parading about in a dress something between a brigand and a circus-rider, but Prissa and Jack never wearied, and the dream of their outgoing

and incoming was to meet him. Prissa's other dream of perfect happiness was drinking tea on the terrace at the Châlet with little Geoffry and Lucy and Lena Smith, where they all worshipped the Spaniard together, and told one another stories about the funny horse and the little pig that tried to eat out of Lena's hand. Their one trouble was that Mademoiselle Bouchon made them tell their adventures in French. At all events they could *laugh* in English, and she never found it out. Lady Mary would come out smiling while the tea was going on, and nod her kind cap-ribbons at them all. She was a portly and good-humoured person who did foolish things sometimes, and was fond of interfering and trying to make people happy her own way. She had taken a fancy to Esther, and one day—ingenious Lady Mary—she said to herself, "I am sure this would do for poor Geoffry: he ought to marry. This is the very thing. Dear me, I wish he would come here for a day or two," and she went back into her room and actually wrote to him to come.

The two ladies went to the service of the Carmes that evening. It was the fashion to go and listen for the voice of one of the monks. There was a hustle of company rustling in: smart people were coming up through the darkening streets; old French ladies protected by their little maids, arriving with their "heures" in their hands; lights gleamed in the windows here and there, and in the chapel of the convent a blaze of wax and wick, and artificial flowers, and triumphant music. It was a lovely voice, thrilling beyond the others, pathetic with beautiful tones of subdued passionate expression. The Carme who sang to them was a handsome young man, very pale, with a black crisp beard: his head overlooked all the others as they came and went with their flaming tapers in mystic progressions. Was it something in the man's voice, some pathetic cadence which recalled other tones to which Esther had listened once in her life, and that of late years she had scarcely dared to remember? Was it chance, was it fate, was it some strange presentiment of his approach, which made Esther begin to think of Rome, and of the days when she first knew Geoffry, and of the time before she married? As she thought of old days she seemed to see Smith's kind blue eyes looking at her, and to hear his voice sounding through the music. How often she had longed to see him—how well she remembered him—the true heart, the good friend of her youth.

Esther's heart stirred with remembrances of things far far away from the convent and its prayers and fastings and penances. Penance and fastings and vigils—such things should be her portion, she thought, by rights; and it was with a pang of shame, of remorse, of bitter regret, and of fresh remorse for the pang itself, that she rose from her knees—the service over, the music silent, and wax-lights extinguished—and came out into the night with her friend. As they were walking up the street Lady Mary said quietly and unconsciously enough, though Esther started guiltily and asked herself if she had been speaking her thoughts aloud—

"Mrs. Halbert, did you ever meet my husband's cousin, Jeff Smith?"

I hear he is in the Pyrenees; I am writing to him to come and stay with us, he is such a good fellow."

Esther, if she had learnt nothing else since the old Roman days, had learnt at least to control herself and to speak quietly and indifferently, though her eyes suddenly filled with tears and there came a strange choking in her throat. Her companions noticed nothing as Mrs. Halbert said, "Yes, she had known him at Rome, but that she had not seen him for years."

"Ah, then, you must renew your acquaintance," Lady Mary said; adding, abruptly, "Do you know, I hear a Carmelite is going to make her profession next week: we must go. These things are horrible, and yet they fascinate me somehow."

"What a touching voice that was," said Esther. "It affected me quite curiously." To which Lady Mary replied,—

"I remember that man last year: he has not had time to emaciate himself to a mummy. He sat next me at the table-d'hôte, and we all remarked him for being so handsome and pleasant, and for the quantities of champagne he drank. There was a little quiet dark man, his companion. They used to go out riding together, and sit listening to the music at the Thermes. There was a ball there one night, and I remember seeing the young fellow dancing with a beautiful Russian princess."

"Well?" said Esther, listening and not listening.

"Well, one day he didn't come to dinner, and the little dark man sat next me alone. I asked after my neighbour; heard he had left the place, but Marguerite—you know the handsome chamber-maid—told me, under breath, that Jean had been desired to take the handsome gentleman's portmanteau down on a truck to the convent of the Carmes; a monk had received it at the garden door, and that was all she knew. I am sure I recognized my friend to-night. He looked as if he knew me when he came round with the purse."

"Poor thing," said Mrs. Halbert, sighing. Esther came home to the hotel, flushed, with shining eyes, looking like she used to look ten years ago. She found Mrs. Penton asleep in the sitting-room, resting her portly person upon the sofa. Olga was nodding solemnly over a dubious French novel. Mr. Penton was taking a nap behind his *Galignani*—the lamp was low. It all looked inexpressibly dull and commonplace after the glimpses of other lives which she had had that night. She seemed lifted above herself somehow by the strains of solemn music, by memories of tenderest love and hopeless separation, by dreams of what might have been, what had been before now, of the devotion which had triumphed over all the natural longings and aspirations of life. Could it be that these placid people were of the same race and make as herself and others of whom she had heard? Esther crept away to the room where her children were sleeping in their little cots with faithful old Spicer stitching by the light of a candle. As the mother knelt down by the girl's little bed, a great burst of silent tears seemed

to relieve her heart, and she cried and cried, she scarcely dared tell herself why.

Have you ever seen a picture painted in black and in gold? Black-robed saints, St. Dominic and others, on a golden glory, are the only instances I can call to mind, except an Italian painter's fancy of a golden-haired woman in her yellow damask robe, with a mysterious black background behind her. She had a look of my heroine, though Esther Halbert is an ugly woman, and the picture is the likeness of one of those beautiful fair-haired Venetians whose beauty (while people are still saying that beauty fades away and perishes) is ours after all the centuries, and has been the munificent gift of Titian and his compeers, who first discerned it, to the unknown generations that were yet to be born and to admire. As one looks at the tender face, it seems alive, even now, and one wonders if there is light anywhere for the yellow lady. Can she see into that gloom of paint more clearly than into the long gallery where the people are pacing and the painters are working at their easels?—or is she as blind as the rest of us? Does she gaze unconscious of all that surrounds her? Does she fancy herself only minute particles of oil and yellow ochre and colouring matter, never guessing that she is a whole, beautiful with sentiment, alive with feeling and harmony?

I daresay she is blind like the rest of us, as Esther was that Friday in July when she came hurrying through the midday sunshine, with her little son scampering beside her, hiding his head from the burning rays among the long folds of her black widow's dress.

At Bigorre, in the Pyrenees, there is one little spot where the sun's rays seem to burn with intenser heat—a yellow blaze of light amid black and sudden shade. It is a little *Place* leading to the *Thermes*. In it a black marble fountain flows, with a clear limpid stream, and a Roman inscription still renders grace for benefits received to the nymph of the healing waters. Arched gates with marble corner-stones, windows closed and shuttered, form three sides of the little square; on the fourth there is a garden behind an iron railing, where tall hollyhocks nod their heads, catalpas flower and scent the air, and great beds of marguerites and sad autumnal flowers lead to the flight of black marble steps in front of the house.

Esther, hurrying along, did not stop to look or to notice. She was too busy shielding and helping little blinded Jack to skurry across the burning desert, as he called it. They reached the shady street at last. Jack emerged from his mother's skirts, and Esther stopped, hesitated, and looked back across the place from which they had just come. The sun was blinding and burning, great dazzling patches were in her eyes, and yet—— It was absurd; but she could not help thinking that she had seen some one as she crossed: a figure that she seemed to remember seeing—rather to have seen, coming down the black marble steps of the house in the garden—a figure under an umbrella,

which put her in mind of some one she had known. It was absurd: it was a fancy, an imagination; it came to her from the foolish thoughts she had indulged in of late. And yet she looked to make sure that such was the case; and, turning her head, she just saw in the distance a man dressed in white, as people dress in the Pyrenees, walking under a big umbrella down the opposite street, which leads to the Baths. Esther smiled at her own fancies. An umbrella! why should not an umbrella awaken associations?

"Come along, mamma," said Jack, who had seen nothing but the folds of his mother's dress, and who was not haunted by associations as yet. "Come along, mamma; don't stop and think."

Esther took Jack's little outstretched paw into her long slim fingers, but as she walked along the shady side of the street—past the Moorish shop-fronts arched with black marble, with old women gossiping in the interiors, and while Jack stared at the passers-by, at a monk plodding by with sandalled feet, at a bath-woman balancing an enormous machine on her head, or longed as he gazed at the beautiful peaches and knitted wool-work piled on the shop ledges, Esther went dreaming back to ten years before, wishing, as grown-up people wish, not for the good things spread before them, but for those of years long gone by—for the fruit long since eaten, or rotten, or planted in the ground.

"Mammy, there's the Spaniard. Oh! look at his legs," said Jack, "they are all over ribbons." And Esther, to please him, smiled and glanced at a bandy-legged mountebank disposing of bargains to two credulous Britons.

"Why, there's uncle Penton come back," Jack cried in great excitement; "he is buying muffetees. Mammy, come and see what he has got," cried Jack, trying to tug away his hand.

"Not now, dear," said Esther. The slim fingers closed upon Jack's little hand with too firm a grasp for him to escape, and he trudges on perforce.

They had almost reached the hotel where they lived by this time. The great clock-tower round which it is built serves as a landmark and beacon. The place was all alive—jangling and jingling; voices calling to one another, people passing and repassing along the wooden galleries, horses clamping in the court-yard. A riding-party had just arrived; yellow, pink, red-capped serving-women were hurrying about, showing guests to their chambers or escorting them across the road to the dependencies of the house.

As Esther and her little boy were walking along the wooden gallery which led to her rooms, they met Masters, Mrs. Penton's maid, who told them with a stiff that her mistress was in the drawing-room.

"Was Mrs. Penton tired after her journey last night?" Esther asked. "I was sorry not to be at home to receive her, but I did not expect you till to-day."

"No wonder she's exhausted," said Masters; "not a cup of tea have

we 'ad since we left on Tuesday-week. They wanted me to take some of their siroppy things. I shan't be sorry to see Heaton Place again, I know."

Masters was evidently much put out, and Esther hurried on to the sitting-room, where she found Mrs. Penton lying down as usual, and Olga, in a state of excitement, altering the feathers in her hat.

"How d'ye do, dear?" said Mrs. Penton. "We are come back again."

"We have had a most interesting excursion," said Olga, coming up to kiss her sister-in-law. "I wish you had cared to leave the children, Esther. You might have visited the Lac d'Oo, and that most remarkable ruin, St. Bertrand de Comminges. In *Jamieson's Lives of*——"

"We met such a nice person," interrupted Mrs. Penton. "He came to Bigorre with us in another carriage, but by the same road. He knows you, Esther, and he and Olga made great friends. They got on capitally over the cathedral, and he kindly fetched the Murray for us. We had left it on the table in the *salle-à-manger*, and were really afraid we had lost it." And Mrs. Penton rambled on for a whole half hour, unconscious that no one was listening to her.

Esther had turned quickly to Olga, and asked who this was who knew her.

"Oh, I daresay you don't remember the name," said Olga, rather consciously. "Smith—Mr. Smith of Garstein. He told me he had known you at Rome, before he came into his property."

"Did he say that?" said Esther, flushing a little.

"Or before you married, I really don't remember," said Olga. "We had a great deal of conversation, and persuaded him to come back to Bigorre."

"It's so hot at twelve o'clock," Mrs. Penton was going on; "and parasols are quite insufficient. Are you fond of extreme heat, Esther? Charles says that Lady Kidderminster, summer and winter, always carries a fan in her pocket. They are very convenient when they double up, and take less——"

"What sort of looking person is Mr. Smith?" Esther asked, with a little effort.

"Distinguished-looking, certainly: a long red beard, not very tall, but broadly built, and a very pleasant gentlemanlike manner. You shall see him at the table-d'hôte to-day; he promised to join us. In fact," said Olga, "he proposed it himself."

"I heard him," said Mrs. Penton, placidly. "Olga, I think you have made another conquest. I remember" &c.

Poor Esther could not wait any longer to hear Mrs. Penton's reminiscences, or Olga's self-congratulations; she went away quickly with Jack to her own room, and got her little Priasa into her lap, and made her put her two soft arms round her neck and love her. "Mamma, why are you crying?" said Jack; "we are both quite well, and we have been very good indeed, lately. Madame Bouchon says I am her petty *mari*. I shan't marry her though. I shall marry Lena when I'm a man."

Esther dressed for dinner in her black gauze gown, and followed the others to her usual place at the long, crowded table. Her hands were cold, and she clasped them together, reminding herself by a gentle pressure that she must be quiet and composed, and give no sign that she remembered the past. She no longer wore her widow's cap, only a little piece of lace in her hair, in which good old Spicer took a pride as she pinned up the thick braids. Her grey eyes were looking up and down a little frightened and anxiously: but there was no one she had ever seen before, and she sat down with a sigh of relief; only in another minute, somehow, there was a little stir, and Olga said,—“Esther, would you make room,” and popped down beside her; and then Esther, looking up, saw that her sister-in-law was signing to some one to come into the seat next beyond her. Some one in this case means the particular person, and there he was. Esther had been nervous and excited, but she was suddenly quite herself again. As Smith took his place, he bent forward, and his eyes met Esther's, and he put out his hand. Is it my old Esther? he thought, with a thrill of secret delight at meeting her at last; while Esther, as she put out her slim fingers, said to herself, Is this my old friend? and she looked wistfully to see whether she could read his kind, loyal heart, stamped in his face as of yore. They were both quite young people again for five minutes, and Olga attributed the laughter and high spirits of her neighbour to the charms of her own conversation. Esther said not one word, did not eat, did not drink, but was in a sort of dream.

After dinner they all got up, and went and stood in one of the wooden galleries, watching the lilac and gold as it rippled over the mountains, the Bedat, the Pic du Midi. And so this was all, and the long-looked-for meeting was over. Esther thought it was so simple, so natural, she could hardly believe that this was what she had hoped for and dreaded so long. There was Smith, scarcely changed,—a little altered in manner perhaps, with a beard which improved him, but that was all. All the little tricks of voice and of manner, so familiar once, were there; it was himself. She was glad, and yet it was not all gladness. Why did he not come up to his old friend? Why did he not notice or speak to her? Why did he seem so indifferent? Why did he talk so much to the others, so little to her? Esther was confused, disappointed, and grieved. And yet it was no wonder. She thought she of all people had least right to expect much from him. She was leaning over the side of the gallery, Olga stood next to her in her white dress, with the light of the sunset in her raven black hair, and Smith was leaning against one of the wooden pillars, and talking to Olga. He glanced from the raven black hair to the gentle bent head beyond. But he went on talking to Olga. Esther felt a little lonely, a little deserted. She was used to the feeling, but she sighed, and turned away with a little impatient movement from the beautiful lilac glow. A noisy, welcome comfort was in store for her. With a burst of childish noise and laughter, Priss and Jacky came rushing up the gallery, and jumped upon her with their little eager arms wide open.

"Come for a walk, a little, little short walk, please, mammy," said Jack. And Esther kissed him, and said yes, if he would fetch her hat and her gloves, and her shawl.

As she was going, Smith came up hesitating, and said, not looking her full in the face,—

"I had a message from my cousin, to beg you to look in there this evening. Miss Halbert has kindly promised to come." And Esther also, looking up with a reproachful glance he thought, answered very quietly she would try to come after her walk. He watched her as she walked away down the long gallery with her children clinging to her side; and all the sunset lights and shadows falling upon them as they went. "What a pretty picture it makes," he said to Miss Halbert.

"I'm so glad you think Esther nice-looking," said Olga. "It is not everybody who does. Shall we take a stroll towards the music, Mr. Smith? . . ."

Esther had no heart for the music and company, and wandered away into a country road. All the fields of broad Indian-corn leaves were glowing as the three passed along: low bright streaks lay beyond the western plains, and a still evening breeze came blowing and gently stirring the flat green leaves. Jacky and Prissa were chattering to one another. Esther could not speak very much; her heart was too full. Was she glad—was she sad? What had she expected? Was this the meeting she had looked for so long? "He might have spoken one word of kindness, he might have said something more than that mere How do you do? Of course he was indifferent—how could it be otherwise? but he might have shammed a little interest," poor Esther thought; "only a very little would have satisfied me."

It was quite dark when she reached Lady Mary's, after seeing her children to bed. Olga, and Mr. Penton, and Smith were there already, and Lady Lucy was singing, when Esther came into the great bare dark room. The young lady was singing a little French song in the dimness, with a pathetic, pleasant tune,—"*Si tu savais*," its name was. She gave it with charming expression, and when she had finished, they were all silent for a moment or two, until Lady Mary began to bustle about and to pour out the tea.

"Take this to Mrs. Halbert, Geoffry," she said, "and tell her about my scheme for to-morrow, and persuade her to come."

Smith brought the tea as he was bid.

"We all want to go over to Grippe, if you will come too," he said.

He looked down kindly at her as he spoke, and the poor foolish woman flushed up with pleasure as she agreed to join them. She was sorry afterwards when she, and Olga, and Mr. Penton walked home together through the dark streets.

"I wonder whether Mr. Smith means to join all our excursions," said Miss Halbert. "I just mentioned my wish to see Grippe, and he jumped at it directly."

But Esther felt a chill somehow as Mr. Penton answered,—

“Certainly, I—a—remarked it, Olga; you—a are not—perhaps aware that you have attractions—to a—no common degree. Mr. Smith has certainly—a—discovered them.”

Poor Esther! it seemed hard to meet her old friend at last, only to see how little he remembered her; and yet she thought all is as it should be; and with my Jacky and my Prissa to love, I am not to be pitied. Still, there was a strange ache in her heart next morning, when they all assembled after the early breakfast: she could not feel cheery and unconscious like Lady Mary, or conscious and flattered like Olga. The children in their clean cotton frocks were in raptures, and so far Esther was happy.

The road to Grippe is along a beautiful mossy valley, with a dashing stream foaming over the pebbles, and little farms and homesteads dotting the smooth green slopes. Olga and Smith were on horseback; Penton was also bumping majestically along upon a huge bay horse; Esther and Lady Mary, and the Smith children and her own, were packed away into a big carriage with Mdlle. Bouchon, and little Geoffry Smith on the box. The children were in a state of friskiness which seriously alarmed the two mammas. They seemed to have at least a dozen little legs a-piece. Their screams of laughter reached the equestrians, who were keeping up a somewhat solemn conversation upon the beauties of nature, and the cultivation of Indian corn: Geoffry wondered what all the fun might be, and Olga remarked that the children were very noisy, and that Esther certainly spoilt little Jack.

“Lady Kidderminster strongly advises his being sent to a preparatory school,” said Penton, with a jog between each word; while Smith looked up at the blue sky, then down into the green valley, and forgot all about them, trying to catch the tones of the woman he had loved.

The chalet was a little rough unfinished place at the foot of the Pic: the horses were put up, and the excursionists got down; they all drank milk in clean wooden bowls, crowded round the wood fire, and peeped at the rough workmen and shepherds who were playing cards in the next compartment—room it could not be called, for the walls were only made of bars of wood at a certain distance from each other. The children's delight at seeing all over the house at once was unbounded. Jacky slipped his hand between the wooden bars, and insisted on shaking hands with a great rough road-maker in a sheepskin, who smiled kindly at the little fellow's advances.

Lady Mary was very much disappointed and perplexed to see the small result of her kindly schemes. It was unbelievable that Geoffry should prefer that great, uninteresting, self-conscious Miss Halbert, to her gentle and tender little widow; and yet it was only too evident. What could be the reason of it? She looked from one to the other. Esther was sitting by the fire on a low wooden stool. She seemed a little sad, a little drooping. The children were laughing about her as usual; and she

was holding a big wooden bowl full of milk, from which they sipped when they felt inclined. The firelight just caught the golden tints in her brown, thick hair; her hat was on the floor at her feet; little Prissa—like her, and not like her—was peeping over her shoulder. It was a pretty picture: the flame, the rough and quaint simplicity of the place, seemed to give it a sort of idyllic grace. As for Smith, he was standing at the paneless windows looking out at the view: all the light was streaming through his red beard. It was a straight and well-set figure, Lady Mary thought; he looked well able to take care of himself and of her poor gentle Esther, too. He was abstracted—evidently thinking of something besides the green valleys and pastures—could it, could it be that odious affected woman stuck up in an attitude in the middle of the room who was the object of his dreams?

An odd jumble of past, present, and future was running through Geoffry's mind, as he looked out of the hole in the wall, and speculated upon what was going to happen to him here in this green pasture-land by the side of the cool waters. Were they waters of comfort—was happiness his own at last? somewhat sadly he thought to himself that it was not now what it would have been ten years ago. He could look at the happiest future with calmness. It did not dazzle and transport him as it would have done in former times—he was older, more indifferent: he had seen so many things cease and finish, so many fancies change, he had awakened from so many vivid dreams, that now perhaps he was still dreaming; life had only become a light sleep, as it were, from which he often started and seemed to awaken. Even Esther . . . what did it all mean? did he love her less now that he had seen her, and found her unchanged, sweeter if possible—and he could not help thinking it—not indifferent? Would the charm vanish with the difficulties, as the beauty of a landscape ends where the flat and prosperous plains begin. He did not think so—he thought so—he loved her—he mistrusted her; he talked to Olga, and yet he could not keep his eyes from following Esther as she came and went. All she said, all she did, seemed to him like some sort of music which modulates and changes from one harmonious thing to another. A solemn serenity, a sentiment of wordless emotion was hers, and withal, the tender waywardness and gentle womanliness which had always seemed to be part of her. She was not handsome now, any more than she had ever been—the plain lines—the heavy hair—the deep-set eyes were the same—the same as those eyes Smith could remember in Roman gardens, in palaces with long echoing galleries, looking at him through imploring tears on the Pincian Hill. They had haunted him for seven years since he first caught the trick of watching to see them brighten. Now, they brightened when the two little dark-headed children came running to her knee. Raphael could find no subject that pleased him better. Smith was no Raphael, but he, too, thought that among all the beautiful pictures of daily life there is no combination so simple, so

touching as that of children who are clinging about their mother. And these pictures are to be seen everywhere and in every clime and place; no galleries are needed, no price need be paid; the background is of endless variety, the sun shines, and the mother's face brightens, and all over the world, perhaps, the children come running into her arms. White arms or dusky, bangled or braceleted, or scarred with labour, they open, and the little ones, clasped within loving walls, feel they are safe.

Quite oblivious of some observation of Miss Halbert's, Smith suddenly left his window and walked across to the fire, and warmed his hands, and said some little word to Esther, who was still sitting on her low seat. She was hurt and annoyed by his strange constraint and distance of manner. She answered coldly, and got up by a sudden impulse, and walked away to where Lady Mary was standing cutting bread-and-butter for the children. "Decidedly," thought the elder lady, "things are going wrong. I will ask Geoffry to-night what he thinks of my widow." "I am a fool for my pains," Geoffry thought, standing by the fire, "and she is only a hard-hearted flirt after all."

He was sulky and out of temper all the way back. In vain did Olga ransack her brain, and produce all her choicest platitudes for his entertainment. In vain Penton recalled his genteel reminiscences. Smith answered civilly, it is true, but briefly and constrainedly. He was a fool to have come, to have fancied that such devotion as his could be appreciated or understood by a woman who had shown herself once already faithless, fickle, unworthy. Smith forgot, in his odd humility and mistrust of himself, that he, too, had held back, made no advance, kept aloof, and waited to be summoned.

Geoffry had the good habit of rising early, and setting out for long walks across the hills before the great heat came to scorch up all activity. The water seemed to sparkle more brightly than later in the day. The flowers glistened with fresh dew. Opal morning lights, with refractions of loveliest colour, painted hills and brooks, the water-plants, the fields where the women were working already, and the slippery mountain-sides where the pine-trees grew, and the flocks and goats with their tinkling bells were grazing. It was a charming medley of pastoral sights and scent and fresh air: shadows trembling and quivering, birds fluttering, green thrilling with colour, the clear-cut ridges of the hills, clear waters bubbling among reeds and creeping plants and hanging ferns, among which beautiful dragon-flies were darting. Smith had been up to the top of the Bedat, and was coming down into civilized life again, when he stopped for an instant to look at the bubbling brook which was rushing along its self-made ravine, some four or five feet below the winding path; a field lay beyond it, and farther still, skirting the side of a hill, the pretty lime-tree walk which leads to the baths in the mountain. Smith, who had been thinking matters over as he stumbled down the steep pathway, and settling that it was too late—she did not care for him—he had ceased caring for her—best go, and leave things as they were—suddenly came upon a

group which touched and interested him, and made him wonder whether, after all, prudence and good sense were always the wisest and the most prudent of things. In the middle of the stream some thousand years ago, a great rock had rolled down from the heights above, and sunk into the bed of the stream, with the water rushing and bubbling all round it, and the water-lilies floating among the ripples. . . . Perched on the rock, like the maid of the stream, was Esther, with Jacky and Piisa clinging close to her, and sticking long reeds and water-leaves into her hair. The riverkin rushed away, twisting and twirling and disappearing into green. The leaves and water-plants swayed with the ripples, the children wriggled on their narrow perch, while Esther, with a book in her hand, and a great green umbrella, looked bright, and kind, and happy.

"Cousin Jeff, cousin Jeff!" cried little Jack, in imitation of the little Smith, "come into the steamer, there's lots of room."

"How d'ye do?" said her mother, still bright, and kind, and happy.

"How d'ye do, Mrs. Undine?" said Smith, brightening and coming to the water's edge.

As Smith walked back to his breakfast, he thought to himself—"If she would but give me one little sign that she liked me, I think—I think I could not help speaking."

And Lady Mary, who had her little talk out with her cousin after breakfast, discovered, to her great surprise, that what she had thought of as a vague possibility some day, very far off, was not impossible, and might be near at hand after all. She did not say much to Smith, and he did not guess how much she knew of all that was passing in his mind. "He will go away, he will never come forward unless Esther meets him half way," the elder lady thought to herself, as he left the room; and she longed to speak to Esther, but she could not summon courage, though opportunity was not wanting.

They were standing in the balcony of the chalet that very afternoon, watching the people go by: first one child went away, then another, and at last Lady Mary and Esther were left alone. "Look at that team of oxen dragging the great trunks of the trees," said Lady Mary; "how picturesque the peasant people are in their mountain dress!"

"The men look so well in their *bérets*," Esther said; "what a fine-looking young fellow that is who is leading the cart. How much prettier and more picturesque the blue and red caps are than our chimney-pot hats. There is Mr. Smith crossing the street—he would look very well in a *béret*, with his long red beard."

"Certainly he would," said Lady Mary; and then she suddenly added, "Esther, would you do me a favour? They have been talking of going to the fair at Tarbes to-morrow. I shall be obliged to stay at home with my husband and Lucy. Would you bring Geoffrey a *béret*, and give it to him, and make him wear it? I know you will if I ask you."

"A red, or a blue one?" said Esther, smiling.

"The nicest you can get," said Lady Mary. "Thank you very much indeed."

Lady Kidderminster, who must have employed her time well while she was in the Pyrenees, "had been very much struck by Tarbes," Mr. Penton declared. "It is pleasantly situated," Murray says, "on the clear Adour, in the midst of a fertile plain in full view of the Pyrenees. Public walks contribute to the public health and recreation. The market-people, in their various costumes, are worth seeing."

Geoffry Smith received a short note from Mrs. Penton two mornings after the Grippe expedition. It ran as follows :—

DEAR MR SMITH,—Mr Penton is making an excursion to Tarbes to-day. We start at two, so that we may not miss our lunch, as it is not safe to trust to chance for it, and we should be much pleased for you to join us after, but in case of rain we should give it up. Unfortunately, there appears no chance of anything so refreshing.

Sincerely yours,

MIRA PENTON.

To which Smith, who was rather bewildered, briefly answered that he should be delighted to join them at the station at two. The station was all alive with country folks, in their quaint pretty dresses, *berets*, red caps, brown hoods, and snooded gay-coloured kerchiefs, and red cloaks like ladies' open-cloaks. The faces underneath all these bright trappings were sad enough, with brown wistful eyes, and pinched, worn cheeks. Ruskin has written of mountain gloom and mountain glory, and in truth the dwellers among the hills seem to us, who live upon the plain, sad and somewhat oppressed.

Smith looked here and there for his party, and discovered at last, rather to his dismay, Olga, her sister and her brother-in-law, sitting on a bench together. Then Esther had not come after all; he felt inclined to escape and go back to the town, but Olga caught sight of him too, and graciously beckoned.

"Mrs. Halbert is not coming, I am afraid?" said Smith, shaking hands with them.

"Esther, do you mean?" asked Mrs. Penton. "She was here a minute ago. Jacky took her to look at a pig.—Was it a pig or a gout, Olga? I didn't notice."

Mrs. Penton's naïve remarks gave Smith a little trouble sometimes, and he could not always suppress a faint smile. Fortunately Esther came up at this moment, and it was not perceived.

Esther at one time had not meant to come, but she could not resist the children's entreaties, or trust them to the Pentons alone. She was weary and dispirited; she had passed a wakeful, feverish night. How or when or where it began, she did not know, but she was conscious now that in her heart of hearts she had looked to meet Geoffry again some day and hoped and believed that he would be unchanged. But she now saw that it was not so—he liked her only as he liked other people, with that kindly heart of his—no thought of what had been, occurred to him. He

might be a friend, a pleasant acquaintance, but the friend of old, never, never again. How foolish she had been, how unwomanly, how forward. Even at nine-and-twenty Esther could blush like a girl to think how she had thought of Geoffrey. She whose heart should be her children's only; she who had rejected his affection when it might have been hers; she who had been faithless and selfish and remorseful so long—she was glad almost to suffer now, she was so angry and vexed with herself. In future she thought she would try to be brave and more simple: she would love her darlings and live for them; and perhaps some day it might be in her power to do something for him—to do him some service—and when they were very old people, she would tell him perhaps how truly she had been his friend all her life.

The sun was blazing and burning up everything. The train stopped at a bridge, and they all got down from their carriages, and set off walking towards the market. Squeak, chatter, jingle of bells, screaming of babies, pigs and pigs and pigs, pretty grey oxen, with carts yoked to their horns, priests, a crowd assembled round an old woman with a sort of tripod, upon which you placed your foot for her to blacken and smarten your shoes; mantillas, green and red umbrellas, rows of patient-looking women, with sad eyes, holding their wares in their hands, scraggy fowls, small little pears, a cabbage, perhaps brought from over the mountain, a few potatoes in a shabby basket;—the scarcity and barrenness struck Smith very sadly. Esther was quite affected; she was emptying her purse and putting little pieces right and left into the small thin hands of the children. They passed one stall where a more prosperous-looking couple—commerçants from Toulouse—were disposing of piles of blue and red Pyrenean caps. Esther stopped and called Jack to her, and tried a little red *béret* on his dark curly head, and kissed her little son as she did so. She had not seen Smith, who was close behind her with Olga, who smiled at the pretty picture. Miss Halbert, soon after leaving the railway carriage, had complained of fatigue, and taken poor Geoffrey firmly but gently by the arm, with a grasp which it was impossible to elude. Esther scarcely noticed them: she walked on with her children as usual, and her motherly heart was melting over the little wan babies, whose own mothers found it so hard a struggle to support them. They were lying in the vegetable-baskets on the ground, slung on to their mothers' backs, and staring with their dark round eyes. Some of the most flourishing among them had little smart caps, with artificial flowers, tied under their chins. After buying Jack's *béret*, Mrs. Halbert seemed to hesitate, and then making up her mind she asked for another somewhat larger, which she paid for, and then turned to Smith with her old bright look and gave it him, saying,—

"I think you would look very well in a *béret*, Mr. Smith—don't you like a blue one best?"

Smith wore his *béret* all day; but Olga the inevitable held him, and would not let him go. Esther thought it a little hard, only she was

determined not to think about it. They wandered for hours through the bare burning streets. There seemed to be no shade: the brooks sparkled, bright blazing flowers grew in gardens, the houses were close-shuttered, scarcely any one was to be seen; little bright-plumaged birds came and drank at the streams, and flew away stirring the dust. The children got tired and cross, and weary; the elders' spirits sank. Some one, standing at a doorway, told them of a park, which sounded shady and refreshing, and where they thought they would wait for their train. The road lay along a white lane with a white wall on either side, and dusty poplars planted at regular intervals. Esther tried to cheer the children, and to tell them stories as well as she could in the clouds of dust. Mrs. Penton clung to her husband, Olga hung heavily upon Geoffry's aching arm. "He might come and help me with the children." Esther thought he would have done so once. They reached the gates of the park at last. It was like utter desolation enclosed behind iron railings—so it seemed, at least, to the poor mother: ragged shrubs, burning sun, weeds and rank grass growing along the neglected gravel walks. There was a great white museum or observatory in the middle to which all these gravel paths converged; and there was—yes, at last—there was a gloomy-looking clump of laurel and fir trees, where she thought she might perhaps find some shade for Jack and for Prissa. As she reached the place, it was all she could do not to burst out crying, she was so tired, so troubled, and every minute the dull aching at her heart seemed to grow worse and worse. Poor Esther! The others came up and asked her if she would not like to see the view from the observatory; but she shook her head, and said she was tired, and should stay where she was, and they all went away and left her. One French lady went by in her slippers, with a faded Indian scarf, and an old Leghorn hat, discoursing as she went to some neglected-looking children,—

"Savez-vous, ma fille, que vous faites des grimaces; ce n'est pas joli, mon enfant, il faut vous surveiller, *mon* Héléne. Les grimaces ne se font pas dans la bonne société. Le parc est vaste," . . . she continued, changing the subject; her voice dwindled away into the arid, burning distance, and the desolation seemed greater than ever. . . . It seemed to Esther as if hours and hours had passed since the others had left her.

"I have some good news for you," said Smith, cheerfully, appearing from behind the laurels. "Mrs. Halbert, we have only just time to catch the train. Come, Jack, I'm going to be your horse; get up on my back," and Geoffry set off running with the delighted Jack, just as Olga appeared in search of him.

Esther and Prissa set off running too, and the Pentons followed as best they could.

The little station was again all alive and crowded by peasants and countrywomen, Spanish bandits with their packs, three English tourists in knickerbockers. Smith met them with Jack capering at his side, and swinging by his new friend's hand,—

"I have taken the tickets," he said. "Thank goodness, we have done with Tarbes. What a beastly hole it is."

"I am surprised," Penton remarked, "that Lady Kidderminster should have had such a high opinion of the—a—place. She particularly mentioned an amphitheatre of which I can gain no information."

"Oh, dear! we shall never get in in time for the table-d'hôte," faintly gasped Mrs. Penton, sinking into a seat, "and the dinner will be over."

The benches were full, and they were all obliged to disperse here and there as they could find places. Esther perched herself upon a packing-case, with little Prissa half asleep on her knee. What a dreary day she had spent—she gave a sigh of relief to think it was over.

"Have you room here for Jack?" said Geoffry, coming up. "He won't own he is tired." . . .

"Come, my son," said Esther, putting her arm round the boy, and pulling him up beside her. "You have been very good to Jack, Mr. Smith," she said, with an upward look of her clear eyes.

Smith looked at her.

"It seems very strange," he said, with a sudden emotion, "to meet you again like this. I sometimes wonder whether it is indeed you and me, or quite different people."

"I thought," said Esther, "you had forgotten that we had ever been friends, Mr. Smith."

"I thought *you* had forgotten it," said Smith, very crossly. There was a jar in his voice—there was a mist before his eyes. She was tired, vexed, over-done. Poor Esther suddenly burst into tears.

"My dear, my dear, don't cry," said Smith. "What can I say to beg your pardon? you should have known me better—you . . ."

"I cannot understand about that amphitheatre," said Mr. Penton, coming up. "Murray, you see, does not allude to it."

"Why don't you go and ask the man at the ticket-office?" said Smith authoritatively, and Penton, rather bewildered, obeyed.

"I was a little afraid of you," said Smith, "when I first saw you. I tried to keep away, but I could not help myself, and came. I should have gone to the end of the world if you had been there. I have never changed—never forgotten. I love you as I have always loved you. Dear Esther, say something to me; put me out of this horrible suspense——"

"What a fearful crowd; how it does crush one," said Mrs. Penton, suddenly appearing. "Can you tell me where Charles has hidden himself? He put my eau-de-Cologne in his pocket, and really in this crowd . . ."

Esther could not answer. She was heading over Prissa, and trying to hide her tears. Smith politely pointed out the ticket-office to Mrs. Penton, and then, with great gravity, turned his back upon the lady, and took Esther's hand, and said with his kind voice, "Dear Esther, once you used not to be afraid of telling me what you thought. Won't you speak to me now? Indeed I am the same as I was then."

"And I am not the same?" said Esther smiling, with her sweet face still wet with tears; and with a tender Esther-like impulse she took her children's two little hands and put them into Geoffrey's broad palm.

Geoffrey understood her, though he did not know all she meant. The Pentons joined them again, and the train came up, and the others wearily sank into their places, but Mrs. Halbert's fatigue was gone. All the way back neither Smith nor Esther spoke one word to each other. The sun was setting; all the land was streaming with light; the stars were beginning to shine behind the hills when they got back to Bigorre.

"Will you come for a walk?" said Smith, as he left Esther at the door of the inn; and in the evening he came for her; and, though Olga looked puzzled and not over-pleased, Esther put on her hat, and said,—

"I am ready, Mr. Smith." And they went out together without any explanation.

They went up the pretty lime-tree walk which leads to the baths of the Salut. People were sitting in the dark on the benches talking in low evening whispers. Priests were taking their recreation, and pacing up and down in groups. From the valley below came an occasional tinkle of goats' bells, a fresh smell of wild thyme, a quizzing of crickets. The wain was moving over the hill-side, the lights twinkled from the houses in the town; and Smith and Esther talked and talked, counting over the fears, the doubts, and the perplexities of the last few days. Now, for the first time, Esther felt a comfort and security which had never been hers before,—not even in the first early-days of her marriage; not since the time when she bade Smith farewell on the Pincio. It seemed to her now as if all care for the future, all bewilderment and uncertainty, were over. Here was the faithful friend once more ready to do battle for her with the difficulties of life: ready to shield, and to serve, and encourage to decide,—to tell her what was right; and poor Esther had long felt that to her decision was like a great pain and impossibility. But here was Smith to advise, and it seemed to her as if troubles and difficulties became like strong places now that he was there. His manner of looking at life was unlike that of the people among whom she had been living: he seemed to see things from a different level, and yet she felt as if he only saw clearly, and that everything he said was right and true. Some people seem by intuition to see only truth and right; others must needs work it out by failing and sorrow. They realize truth by the pain of what is false, honour through dishonour, right by wrongs repented of with bitter pangs. And Esther had long felt that this was her fate. She did not realize all that she understood later,—only she felt it somehow; she drifted into a peaceful calm, and, thankful, she seemed suddenly and unawares to be gliding through still waters after the tempest.

When she awoke in the morning she knew that he was near at hand; she heard his kind voice, and the children's prattle down in the courtyard below. Later in the day he would come up to see her, and they talked over old days, and the new days seemed to shine with a sudden

gleam now that he had come into them; the dull hours went more swiftly, the sky seemed brighter; evening came full of sweet tones, mysterious lights, and peace and perfume; people passing by seemed strolling, too, in a golden beatitude. They, too, Esther fancied, surely must feel the sweetness and depth of the twilight. The morning came with a bright flash, not dawning with a great weight of pain and listlessness as before. In the hot blaze of the mid-day sun Geoffrey would come into the shaded room where the women were sitting at work by the window.

It was, indeed, to him like a memory of old times, to be sitting with Esther at an open window, with the shadows of the orange-trees lying on the floor where the shade of the awning did not reach. Jack liked playing with the shadows, putting his little leg out into the sunshine, and pulling it back, to try and cheat the light and carry some away; but Prissa (her grown-up name was to be Priscilla) liked best sitting quietly on her mother's knee, and, as it were, staring at the stories she told her with great round eyes. The story broke off abruptly when Smith came in, and another tale began. It seemed like a dream to poor Geoffrey to find himself sitting there, with Esther, at an open window, with the sounds and the sunshine without, sounds of hooves at the water, of the water rushing, of voices calling to each other, of sudden bursts of bells from the steeples of Bagnères de Bigorre. It seemed to him almost as if all the years were not, and he was his old self again. Can you fancy what it was to him after his long waiting, long resignation, long hopelessness, to find himself suddenly in port, as it were, with his wish there before him and almost within his grasp. Death, indifference, distance, other men and women, years, forgetfulness, chance, and human frailty, had all been between them and divided them, and now all these things surmounted, like a miracle these two seemed to be brought together again, only divided by a remembrance.

Some things seem so familiar, so natural, that though they befall us only once or twice in a lifetime perhaps, yet while they last they seem almost eternal, and as if they had been and would be for ever. They suit us, and harmonize and form part of ourselves and of our nature, and so far in truth they are eternal if we ourselves are eternal, with our sympathy and hopes and faithful love.



MR SAUL PROPOSES

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The Claverings.

CHAPTER IV.

FLORENCE BURTON.



IT was now Christmas time at Stratton, or rather Christmas time was near at hand ; not the Christmas next after the autumn of Lord Ongar's marriage, but the following Christmas, and Harry Clavering had finished his studies in Mr. Burton's office. He flattered himself that he had not been idle while he was there, and was now about to commence his more advanced stage of pupilage, under the great Mr. Beaby in London, with hopes which were still good, if they were not so magnificent as they once had been. When he first saw Mr. Burton in his office, and beheld the dusty pigeon-holes with dusty papers, and caught the first glimpse of things as they really were in the workshop of that man of business, he had, to

say the truth, been disgusted. And Mrs. Burton's early dinner, and Florence Burton's "plain face" and plain ways,* had disconcerted him.

On that day he had repented of his intention with regard to Stratton ; but he had carried out his purpose like a man, and now he rejoiced greatly that he had done so. He rejoiced greatly, though his hopes were somewhat sobered, and his views of life less grand than they had been. He was to start for Clavering early on the following morning, intending to spend his Christmas at home, and we will see him and listen to him as he bade farewell to one of the members of Mr. Burton's family.

He was sitting in a small back parlour in Mr. Burton's house, and on the table of the room there was burning a single candle. It was a dull, dingy, brown room, furnished with horsehair-covered chairs, an old horsehair sofa, and heavy rusty curtains. I don't know that there was in the room any attempt at ornament, as certainly there was no evidence of wealth. It was now about seven o'clock in the evening, and tea was over in Mrs. Burton's establishment. Harry Clavering had had his tea, and had eaten his hot muffin, at the further side from the fire of the family table, while Florence had poured out the tea, and Mrs. Burton had sat by the fire on one side with a handkerchief over her lap, and Mr. Burton had been comfortable with his arm-chair and his slippers on the other side. When tea was over, Harry had made his parting speech to Mrs. Burton, and that lady had kissed him, and bade God bless him. "I'll see you for a moment before you go, in my office, Harry," Mr. Burton had said. Then Harry had gone downstairs, and some one else had gone boldly with him, and they two were sitting together in the dingy brown room. After that I need hardly tell my reader what had become of Harry Clavering's perpetual life-enduring heart's misery.

He and Florence were sitting on the old horsehair sofa, and Florence's hand was in his. "My darling," he said, "how am I to live for the next two years?"

"You mean five years, Harry."

"No; I mean two,—that is two, unless I can make the time less. I believe you'd be better pleased to think it was ten."

"Much better pleased to think it was ten than to have no such hope at all. Of course we shall see each other. It's not as though you were going to New Zealand."

"I almost wish I were. One would agree then as to the necessity of this cursed delay."

"Harry, Harry!"

"It is accursed. The prudence of the world in these latter days seems to me to be more abominable than all its other iniquities."

"But, Harry, we should have no income."

"Income is a word that I hate."

"Now you are getting on to your high horse, and you know I always go out of the way when you begin to prance on that beast. As for me, I don't want to leave papa's house where I'm sure of my bread and butter, till I'm sure of it in another."

"You say that, Florence, on purpose to torment me."

"Dear Harry, do you think I want to torment you on your last night? The truth is, I love you so well that I can afford to be patient for you."

"I hate patience, and always did. Patience is one of the worst vices I know. It's almost as bad as humility. You'll tell me you're 'umble next. If you'll only add that you're contented, you'll describe yourself as one of the lowest of God's creatures."

"I don't know about being 'umble, but I am contented. Are not you contented with me, sir?"

"No,—because you're not in a hurry to be married."

"What a goose you are. Do you know I'm not sure that if you really love a person, and are quite confident about him,—as I am of you,—that having to look forward to being married is not the best part of it all. I suppose you'll like to get my letters now, but I don't know that you'll care for them much when we've been man and wife for ten years."

"But one can't live upon letters."

"I shall expect you to live upon mine, and to grow fat on them. There;—I heard papa's step on the stairs. He said you were to go to him. Good-by, Harry;—dearest Harry! What a blessed wind it was that blew you here."

"Stop a moment;—about your getting to Clavering. I shall come for you on Easter-eve."

"Oh, no;—why should you have so much trouble and expense?"

"I tell you I shall come for you,—unless, indeed, you decline to travel with me."

"It will be so nice! And then I shall be sure to have you with me the first moment I see them. I shall think it very awful when I first meet your father."

"He's the most good-natured man, I should say, in England."

"But he'll think me so plain. You did at first, you know. But he won't be uncivil enough to tell me so, as you did. And Mary is to be married in Easter week? Oh, dear, oh, dear; I shall be so shy among them all."

"You shy! I never saw you shy in my life. I don't suppose you were ever really put out yet."

"But I must really put you out, because papa is waiting for you. Dear, dear, dearest Harry. Though I am so patient I shall count the hours till you come for me. Dearest Harry! Then she bore with him, as he pressed her close to his bosom, and kissed her lips, and her forehead, and her glossy hair. When he was gone she sat down alone for a few minutes on the old sofa, and hugged herself in her happiness. What a happy wind that had been which had blown such a lover as that for her to Stratton!

"I think he's a good young man," said Mrs. Burton, as soon as she was left with her old husband upstairs.

"Yes, he's a good young man. He means very well."

"But he is not idle; is he?"

"No—no; he's not idle. And he's very clever;—too clever, I'm afraid. But I think he'll do well, though it may take him some time to settle."

"It seems so natural his taking to Flo; doesn't it? They've all taken one when they went away, and they've all done very well. Deary me; how sad the house will be when Flo has gone."

"Yes,—it'll make a difference that way. But what then? I wouldn't wish to keep one of 'em at home for that reason."

"No, indeed. I think I'd feel ashamed of myself to have a daughter not married, or not in the way to be married afore she's thirty. I couldn't bear to think that no young man should take a fancy to a girl of mine. But Flo's not twenty yet, and Carry, who ~~was~~ the oldest to go, wasn't four-and-twenty when Scarness took her." Thereupon the old lady put her handkerchief to the corner of her eyes, and wept gently.

"Flo isn't gone yet," said Mr. Burton.

"But I hope, B., it's not to be a long engagement. I don't like long engagements. It ain't good,—not for the girl; it ain't, indeed."

"We were engaged for seven years."

"People weren't so much in a hurry then at anything; but I ain't sure it was very good for me. And though we weren't ~~fast~~ married, we were living next door and saw each other. What'll come to Flo if she's to be here and he's to be up in London, pleasuring himself?"

"Flo must bear it as other girls do," said the father, as he got up from his chair.

"I think he's a good young man; I think he is," said the mother. "But don't stand out for too much for 'em to begin upon. What matters? Sure if they were to be a little short you could help 'em." To such a suggestion as this Mr. Burton thought it as well to make no answer, but with ponderous steps descended to his office.

"Well, Harry," said Mr. Burton, "so you're to be off in the morning?"

"Yes, sir; I shall breakfast at home to-morrow."

"Ah,—when I was your age I always used to make an early start. Three hours before breakfast never does any hurt. But it shouldn't be more than that. The wind gets into the stomach." Harry had no remark to make on this, and waited, therefore, till Mr. Burton went on. "And you'll be up in London by the 10th of next month?"

"Yes, sir; I intend to be at Mr. Beilby's office on the 11th."

"That's right. Never lose a day. In losing a day now, you don't lose what you might earn now in a day, but what you might be earning when you're at your best. A young man should always remember that. You can't dispense with a round in the ladder going up. You only make your time at the top so much the shorter."

"I hope you'll find that I'm all right, sir. I don't mean to be idle."

"Pray don't. Of course, you know, I speak to you very differently from what I should do if you were simply going away from my office. What I shall have to give Florence will be very little,—that is, compa-

ratively little. She shall have a hundred a year, when she marries, till I die; and after my death and her mother's she will share with the others. But a hundred a year will be nothing to you."

"Won't it, sir? I think a very great deal of a hundred a year. I'm to have a hundred and fifty from the office; and I should be ready to marry on that to-morrow."

"You couldn't live on such an income,—unless you were to alter your habits very much."

"But I will alter them."

"We shall see. You are so placed that by marrying you would lose a considerable income; and I would advise you to put off thinking of it for the next two years."

"My belief is, that settling down would be the best thing in the world to make me work."

"We'll try what a year will do. So Florence is to go to your father's house at Easter?"

"Yes, sir; she has been good enough to promise to come, if you have no objection."

"It is quite as well that they should know her early. I only hope they will like her as well as we like you. Now I'll say good-night,—and good-by." Then Harry went, and walking up and down the High Street of Stratton, thought of all that he had done during the past year.

On his arrival at Stratton that idea of perpetual misery arising from blighted affection was still strong within his breast. He had given all his heart to a false woman who had betrayed him. He had risked all his fortune on one cast of the die, and, gambler-like, had lost everything. On the day of Julia's marriage he had shut himself up at the school,—luckily it was a holiday,—and had flattered himself that he had gone through some hours of intense agony. No doubt he did suffer somewhat, for in truth he had loved the woman; but such sufferings are seldom perpetual, and with him they had been as easy of cure as with most others. A little more than a year had passed, and now he was already engaged to another woman. As he thought of this he did not by any means accuse himself of inconstancy or of weakness of heart. It appeared to him now the most natural thing in the world that he should love Florence Burton. In those old days he had never seen Florence, and had hardly thought seriously of what qualities a man really wants in a wife. As he walked up and down the hill of Stratton Street with the kiss of the dear, modest, affectionate girl still warm upon his lips, he told himself that a marriage with such a one as Julia Brabazon would have been altogether fatal to his chance of happiness.

And things had occurred and rumours had reached him which assisted him much in adopting this view of the subject. It was known to all the Claverings,—and even to all others who cared about such things,—that Lord and Lady Ongar were not happy together, and it had been already said that Lady Ongar had misconducted herself. There was a

certain count whose name had come to be mingled with hers in a way that was, to say the least of it, very unfortunate. Sir Hugh Clavering had declared, in Mrs. Clavering's hearing, though but little disposed in general to make many revelations to any of the family at the rectory, "that he did not intend to take his sister-in-law's part. She had made her own bed, and she must lie upon it. She had known what Lord Ongar was before she had married him, and the fault was her own." So much Sir Hugh had said, and, in saying it, had done all that in him lay to damn his sister-in-law's fair fame. Harry Clavering, little as he had lived in the world during the last twelve months, still knew that some people told a different story. The earl too and his wife had not been in England since their marriage;—so that these rumours had been filtered to them at home through a foreign medium. During most of their time they had been in Italy, and now, as Harry knew, they were at Florence. He had heard that Lord Ongar had declared his intention of suing for a divorce; but that he supposed to be erroneous, as the two were still living under the same roof. Then he heard that Lord Ongar was ill; and whispers were spread abroad darkly and doubtfully, as though great misfortunes were apprehended.

Harry could not fail to tell himself that had Julia become his wife, as she had once promised, these whispers and this darkness would hardly have come to pass. But not on that account did he now regret that her early vows had not been kept. Living at Stratton, he had taught himself to think much of the quiet domesticities of life, and to believe that Florence Burton was fitter to be his wife than Julia Brabazon. He told himself that he had done well to find this out, and that he had been wise to act upon it. His wisdom had in truth consisted in his capacity to feel that Florence was a nice girl, clever, well-minded, high-principled, and full of spirit,—and in falling in love with her as a consequence. All his regard for the quiet domesticities had come from his love, and had had no share in producing it. Florence was bright-eyed. No eyes were ever brighter, either in tears or in laughter. And when he came to look at her well he found that he had been an idiot to think her plain. "There are things that grow to beauty as you look at them,—to exquisite beauty; and you are one of them," he had said to her. "And there are men," she had answered, "who grow to flattery as you listen to them,—to impudent flattery; and you are one of them." "I thought you plain the first day I saw you. That's not flattery." "Yes, sir, it is; and you mean it for flattery. But after all, Harry, it comes only to this, that you want to tell me that you have learned to love me." He repeated all this to himself as he walked up and down Stratton, and declared to himself that she was very lovely. It had been given to him to ascertain this, and he was rather proud of himself. But he was a little diffident about his father. He thought that, perhaps, his father might see Florence as he himself had first seen her, and might not have discernment enough to ascertain his mistake as he had done. But Florence was not going to

Clavering at once, and he would be able to give beforehand his own account of her. He had not been home since his engagement had been a thing settled; but his position with regard to Florence had been declared by letter, and his mother had written to the young lady asking her to come to Clavering.

When Harry got home all the family received him with congratulations. "I am so glad to think that you should marry early," his mother said to him in a whisper. "But I am not married yet, mother," he answered.

"Do show me a lock of her hair," said Fanny, laughing. "It's twice prettier hair than yours, though she doesn't think half so much about it as you do," said her brother, pinching Fanny's arm. "But you'll show me a lock, won't you," said Fanny.

"I'm so glad she's to be here at my marriage," said Mary, "because then Edward will know her. I'm so glad that he will see her." "Edward will have other fish to fry, and won't care much about her," said Harry.

"It seems you're going to do the regular thing," said his father, "like all the good apprentices. Marry your master's daughter, and then become Lord Mayor of London." This was not the view in which it had pleased Harry to regard his engagement. All the other "young men" that had gone to Mr. Burton's had married Mr. Burton's daughters,—or, at least, enough had done so to justify the Stratton assertion that all had fallen into the same trap. The Burtons, with their five girls, were supposed in Stratton to have managed their affairs very well, and something of these hints had reached Harry's ears. He would have preferred that the thing should not have been made so common, but he was not fool enough to make himself really unhappy on that head. "I don't know much about becoming Lord Mayor," he replied. "That promotion doesn't lie exactly in our line." "But marrying your master's daughter does, it seems," said the Rector. Harry thought that this as coming from his father was almost ill-natured, and therefore dropped the conversation.

"I'm sure we shall like her," said Fanny.

"I think that I shall like Harry's choice," said Mrs. Clavering.

"I do hope Edward will like her," said Mary.

"Mary," said her sister, "I do wish you were once married. When you are, you'll begin to have a self of your own again. Now you're no better than an unconscious echo."

"Wait for your own turn, my dear," said the mother.

Harry had reached home on a Saturday, and the following Monday was Christmas-day. Lady Clavering, he was told, was at home at the park, and Sir Hugh had been there lately. No one from the house except the servants were seen at church either on the Sunday or on Christmas-day. "But that shows nothing," said the Rector, speaking in anger. "He very rarely does come, and when he does, it would be better that he should be away. I think that he likes to insult me by misconducting himself. They say that she is not well, and I can easily believe that all

this about her sister makes her unhappy. If I were you I would go up and call. Your mother was there the other day, but did not see them. I think you'll find that he's away, hunting somewhere. I saw the groom going off with three horses on Sunday afternoon. He always sends them by the church gate just as we're coming out."

So Harry went up to the house, and found Lady Clavering at home. She was looking old and careworn, but she was glad to see him. Harry was the only one of the rectory family who had been liked at the great house since Sir Hugh's marriage, and he, had he cared to do so, would have been made welcome there. But, as he had once said to Sir Hugh's sister-in-law, if he shot the Clavering game, he would be expected to do so in the guise of a head gamekeeper, and he did not choose to play that part. It would not suit him to drink Sir Hugh's claret, and be bidden to ring the bell, and to be asked to step into the stable for this or that. He was a fellow of his college, and quite as big a man, he thought, as Sir Hugh. He would not be a hanger-on at the park, and, to tell the truth, he disliked his cousin quite as much as his father did. But there had even been a sort of friendship,—nay, occasionally almost a confidence, between him and Lady Clavering, and he believed that by her he was really liked.

Lady Clavering had heard of his engagement, and of course congratulated him. "Who told you?" he asked,—“was it my mother?"

"No; I have not seen your mother I don't know when. I think it was my maid told me. Though we somehow don't see much of you all at the rectory, our servants are no doubt more gracious with the rectory servants. I'm sure she must be nice, Harry, or you would not have chosen her. I hope she has got some money."

"Yes, I think she is nice. She is coming here at Easter."

"Ah, we shall be away then, you know; and about the money?"

"She will have a little, but very little;—a hundred a year."

"Oh, Harry, is not that rash of you? Younger brothers should always get money. You're the same as a younger brother, you know."

"My idea is to earn my own bread. It's not very aristocratic, but, after all, there are a great many more in the same boat with me."

"Of course you will earn your bread, but having a wife with money would not hinder that. A girl is not the worse because she can bring some help. However, I'm sure I hope you'll be happy."

"What I meant was that I think it best when the money comes from the husband."

"I'm sure I ought to agree with you, because we never had any." Then there was a pause. "I suppose you've heard about Lord Ongar," she said.

"I have heard that he is very ill."

"Very ill. I believe there was no hope when we heard last; but Julia never writes now."

"I'm sorry that it is so bad as that," said Harry, not well knowing what else to say.

"As regards Julia, I do not know whether it may not be for the best."

It seems to be a cruel thing to say, but of course I cannot but think most of her. You have heard, perhaps, that they have not been happy?"

"Yes; I had heard that."

"Of course; and what is the use of pretending anything with you? You know what people have said of her."

"I have never believed it."

"You always loved her, Harry. Oh, dear, I remember how unhappy that made me once, and I was so afraid that Hugh would suspect it. She would never have done for you;—would she, Harry?"

"She did a great deal better for herself," said Harry.

"If you mean that ironically, you shouldn't say it now. If he dies, she will be well off, of course, and people will in time forget what has been said,—that is, if she will live quietly. The worst of it is that she fears nothing."

"But you speak as though you thought she had been—been—"

"I think she was probably imprudent, but I believe nothing worse than that. But who can say what is absolutely wrong, and what only imprudent? I think she was too proud to go really astray. And then with such a man as that, so difficult and so ill-tempered——! Sir Hugh thinks——" But at that moment the door was opened and Sir Hugh came in.

"What does Sir Hugh think?" said he.

"We were speaking of Lord Ongar," said Harry, sitting up and shaking hands with his cousin.

"Then, Harry, you were speaking on a subject that I would rather not have discussed in this house. Do you understand that, Hermione? I will have no talking about Lord Ongar or his wife. We know very little, and what we hear is simply uncomfortable. Will you dine here to-day, Harry?"

"Thank you, no; I have only just come home."

"And I am just going away. That is, I go to-morrow. I cannot stand this place. I think it the dulllest neighbourhood in all England, and the most gloomy house I ever saw. Hermione likes it."

To this last assertion Lady Clavering expressed no assent; nor did she venture to contradict him.

CHAPTER V.

LADY ONGAR'S RETURN.

BUT Sir Hugh did not get away from Clavering Park on the next morning as he had intended. There came to him that same afternoon a message by telegraph, to say that Lord Ongar was dead. He had died at Florence on the afternoon of Christmas-day, and Lady Ongar had expressed her intention of coming at once to England.

"Why the devil doesn't she stay where she is?" said Sir Hugh, to his wife. "People would forget her there, and in twelve months time the row would be all over."

"Perhaps she does not want to be forgotten," said Lady Clavering.

"Then she should want it. I don't care whether she has been guilty or not. When a woman gets her name into such a mess as that, she should keep in the background."

"I think you are unjust to her, Hugh."

"Of course you do. You don't suppose that I expect anything else. But if you mean to tell me that there would have been all this row, if she had been decently prudent, I tell you that you're mistaken."

"Only think what a man he was."

"She knew that when she took him, and should have borne with him while he lasted. A woman isn't to have seven thousand a year for nothing."

"But you forget that not a syllable has been proved against her, or been attempted to be proved. She has never left him, and now she has been with him in his last moments. I don't think you ought to be the first to turn against her."

"If she would remain abroad, I would do the best I could for her. She chooses to return home; and as I think she's wrong, I won't have her here;—that's all. You don't suppose that I go about the world accusing her?"

"I think you might do something to fight her battle for her."

"I will do nothing,—unless she takes my advice and remains abroad. You must write to her now, and you will tell her what I say. It's an infernal bore, his dying at this moment; but I suppose people won't expect that I'm to shut myself up."

For one day only did the baronet shut himself up, and on the following, he went whither he had before intended.

Lady Clavering thought it proper to write a line to the rectory, informing the family there that Lord Ongar was no more. This she did in a note to Mrs. Clavering; and when it was received, there came over the faces of them all that lugubrious look, which is, as a matter of course, assumed by decorous people when tidings come of the death of any one who has been known to them, even in the most distant way. With the exception of Harry, all the rectory Claverings had been introduced to Lord Ongar, and were now bound to express something approaching to sorrow. Will any one dare to call this hypocrisy? If it be so called, who in the world is not a hypocrite? Where is the man or woman who has not a special face for sorrow before company? The man or woman who has no such face, would at once be accused of heartless impropriety.

"It is very sad," said Mrs. Clavering; "only think, it is but little more than a year since you married them!"

"And twelve such months as they have been for her!" said the Rector, shaking his head. His face was very lugubrious, for though as a parson he was essentially a kindly, easy man, to whom humbug was odious, and who dealt little in the austerities of clerical denunciation, still

he had his face of pulpit sorrow for the sins of the people,—what I may perhaps call his clerical *knack* of gentle condemnation,—and could therefore assume a solemn look, and a little saddened motion of his head, with more ease than people who are not often called upon for such action.

"Poor woman!" said Fanny, thinking of the woman's married sorrows, and her early widowhood.

"Poor man," said Mary, shuddering as she thought of the husband's fate.

"I hope," said Harry, almost sententially, "that no one in this house will condemn her upon such mere rumours as have been heard."

"Why should any one in this house condemn her," said the Rector, "even if there were more than rumours? My dears, judge not, lest ye be judged. As regards her, we are bound by close ties not to speak ill of her—or even to think ill, unless we cannot avoid it. As far as I know, we have not even any reason for thinking ill." Then he went out, changed the tone of his countenance among the rectory stables, and lit his cigar.

Three days after that a second note was brought down from the great house to the rectory, and this was from Lady Clavering to Harry. "Dear Harry," ran the note,—“Could you find time to come up to me this morning? Sir Hugh has gone to North Priory.—Ever yours, H. C.” Harry, of course, went, and as he went, he wondered how Sir Hugh could have had the heart to go to North Priory at such a moment. North Priory was a hunting seat some thirty miles from Clavering, belonging to a great nobleman with whom Sir Hugh much consorted. Harry was grieved that his cousin had not resisted the temptation of going at such a time, but he was quick enough to perceive that Lady Clavering alluded to the absence of her lord as a reason why Harry might pay his visit to the house with satisfaction.

"I'm so much obliged to you for coming," said Lady Clavering. "I want to know if you can do something for me." As she spoke, she had a paper in her hand which he immediately perceived to be a letter from Italy.

"I'll do anything I can, of course, Lady Clavering."

"But I must tell you, that I hardly know whether I ought to ask you. I'm doing what would make Hugh very angry. But he is so unreasonable, and so cruel about Julia. He condemns her simply because, as he says, there is no smoke without fire. That is such a cruel thing to say about a woman ;—is it not?"

Harry thought that it was a cruel thing, but as he did not wish to speak evil of Sir Hugh before Lady Clavering, he held his tongue.

"When we got the first news by telegraph, Julia said that she intended to come home at once. Hugh thinks that she should remain abroad for some time, and indeed I am not sure but that would be best. At any rate he made me write to her, and advise her to stay. He declared that if she came at once he would do nothing for her. The truth is, he does not want to have her here, for if she were again in the house he would have to take her part, if ill-natured things were said."

"That's cowardly," said Harry, stoutly.

"Don't say that, Harry, till you have heard it all. If he believes these things, he is right not to wish to meddle. He is very hard, and always believes evil. But he is not a coward. If she were here, living with him as my sister, he would take her part, whatever he might himself think."

"But why should he think ill of his own sister-in-law? I have never thought ill of her."

"You loved her, and he never did;—though I think he liked her too in his way. But that's what he told me to do, and I did it. I wrote to her, advising her to remain at Florence till the warm weather comes, saying that as she could not specially wish to be in London for the season, I thought she would be more comfortable there than here;—and then I added that Hugh also advised her to stay. Of course I did not say that he would not have her here,—but that was his threat."

"She is not likely to press herself where she is not wanted."

"No,—and she will not forget her rank and her money:—for that must now be hers. Julia can be quite as hard and as stubborn as he can. But I did write as I say, and I think that if she had got my letter before she had written herself, she would perhaps have stayed. But here is a letter from her, declaring that she will come at once. She will be starting almost as soon as my letter gets there, and I am sure she will not alter her purpose now."

"I don't see why she should not come if she likes it."

"Only that she might be more comfortable there. But read what she says. You need not read the first part. Not that there is any secret; but it is about him and his last moments, and it would only pain you."

Harry longed to read the whole, but he ~~did~~ was bid, and began the letter at the spot which Lady Clavering marked for him with her finger. "I have to start on the third, and as I shall stay nowhere except to sleep at Turin and Paris, I shall be home by the eighth;—I think on the evening of the eighth. I shall bring only my own maid, and one of his men who desires to come back with me. I wish to have apartments taken for me in London. I suppose Hugh will do as much as this for me?"

"I am quite sure Hugh won't," said Lady Clavering, who was watching his eye as he read.

Harry said nothing, but went on reading. "I shall only want two sitting-rooms and two bedrooms,—one for myself and one for Clara, and should like to have them somewhere near Piccadilly,—in Clarges Street, or about there. You can write me a line, or send me a message to the Hôtel Bristol, at Paris. If anything fails, so that I should not hear, I shall go to the Palace Hotel; and, in that case, should telegraph for rooms from Paris."

"Is that all I'm to read?" Harry asked.

"You can go on and see what she says as to her reason for coming."

So Harry went on reading. "I have suffered much, and of course I know that I must suffer more; but I am determined that I will face the worst of it at once. It has been hinted to me that an attempt will be made to interfere with the settlement——" "Who can have hinted that?" said Harry. Lady Clavering suspected who might have done so, but she made no answer. "I can hardly think it possible; but, if it is done, I will not be out of the way. I have done my duty as best I could, and have done it under circumstances that I may truly say were terrible;—and I will go on doing it. No one shall say that I am ashamed to show my face and claim my own. You will be surprised when you see me. I have aged so much;——"

"You need not go on," said Lady Clavering. "The rest is about nothing that signifies."

Then Harry refolded the letter and gave it back to his companion.

"Sir Hugh is gone, and therefore I could not show him that in time to do anything; but if I were to do so, he would simply do nothing, and let her go to the hotel in London. Now that would be unkind;—would it not?"

"Very unkind, I think."

"It would seem so cold to her on her return."

"Very cold. Will you not go and meet her?"

Lady Clavering blushed as she answered. Though Sir Hugh was a tyrant to his wife, and known to be such, and though she knew that this was known, she had never said that it was so to any of the Claverings; but now she was driven to confess it. "He would not let me go, Harry. I could not go without telling him, and if I told him he would forbid it."

"And she is to be all alone in London, without any friend?"

"I shall go to her as soon as he will let me. I don't think he will forbid my going to her, perhaps after a day or two; but I know he would not let me go on purpose to meet her."

"It does seem hard."

"But about the apartments, Harry? I thought that perhaps you would see about them. After all that has passed I could not have asked you, only that now, as you are engaged yourself, it is nearly the same as though you were married. I would ask Archibald, only then there would be a fuss between Archibald and Hugh; and somehow I look on you more as a brother-in-law than I do Archibald."

"Is Archie in London?"

"His address is at his club, but I daresay he is at North Priory also. At any rate, I shall say nothing to him."

"I was thinking he might have met her."

"Julia never liked him. And, indeed, I don't think she will care so much about being met. She was always independent in that way, and would go over the world alone better than many men. But couldn't you run up and manage about the apartments? A woman coming home as a widow,—and in her position,—feels an hotel to be so public."

"I will see about the apartments."

"I knew you would. And there will be time for you to send to me, so that I can write to Paris;—will there not? There is more than a week, you know."

But Henry did not wish to go to London on this business immediately. He had made up his mind that he would not only take the rooms, but that he would also meet Lady Ongar at the station. He said nothing of this to Lady Clavering, as, perhaps, she might not approve; but such was his intention. He was wrong no doubt. A man in such cases should do what he is asked to do, and do no more. But he repeated to himself the excuse that Lady Clavering had made,—namely, that he was already the same as a married man, and that, therefore, no harm could come of his courtesy to his cousin's wife's sister. But he did not wish to make two journeys to London, nor did he desire to be away for a full week out of his holidays. Lady Clavering could not press him to go at once, and, therefore, it was settled as he proposed. She would write to Paris immediately, and he would go up to London after three or four days. "If we only knew of any apartments, we could write," said Lady Clavering. "You could not know that they were comfortable," said Harry; "and you will find that I will do it in plenty of time." Then he took his leave; but Lady Clavering had still one other word to say to him. "You had better not say anything about all this at the rectory; had you?" Harry, without considering much about it, said that he would not mention it.

Then he went away and walked again about the park, thinking of it all. He had not seen her since he had walked round the park, in his misery, after parting with her in the garden. How much had happened since then! She had been married in her glory, had become a countess, and then a widow, and was now returning with a tarnished name, almost repudiated by those who had been her dearest friends; but with rank and fortune at her command,—and again a free woman. He could not but think what might have been his chance were it not for Florence Burton! But much had happened to him also. He had almost perished in his misery;—so he told himself;—but had once more "tricked his beams,"—that was his expression to himself,—and was now "flaming in the forehead" of a glorious love. And even if there had been no such love, would a widowed countess with a damaged name have suited his ambition, simply because she had the rich dower of the poor wretch to whom she had sold herself? No, indeed. There could be no question of renewed vows between them now;—there could have been no such question even had there been no "glorious love," which had accrued to him almost as his normal privilege in right of his pupilage in Mr. Burton's office. No;—there could be, there could have been, nothing now between him and the widowed Countess of Ongar. But, nevertheless, he liked the idea of meeting her in London. He felt some triumph in the thought that he should be the first to touch her hand on her return after

all that she had suffered. He would be very courteous to her, and would spare no trouble that would give her any ease. As for her rooms, he would see to everything of which he could think that might add to her comfort; and a wish crept upon him, uninvited, that she might be conscious of what he had done for her.

Would she be aware, he wondered, that he was engaged? Lady Clavering had known it for the last three months, and would probably have mentioned the circumstance in a letter. But perhaps not. The sisters, he knew, had not been good correspondents; and he almost wished that she might not know it. "I should not care to be talking to her about Florence," he said to himself.

It was very strange that they should come to meet in such a way, after all that had passed between them in former days. Would it occur to her that he was the only man she had ever loved?—for, of course, as he well knew, she had never loved her husband. Or would she now be too callous to everything but the outer world to think at all of such a subject? She had said that she was aged, and he could well believe it. Then he pictured her to himself in her weeds, worn, sad, thin, but still proud and handsome. He had told Florence of his early love for the woman whom Lord Ongar had married, and had described with rapture his joy that that early passion had come to nothing. Now he would have to tell Florence of this meeting; and he thought of the comparison he would make between her bright young charms and the shipwrecked beauty of the widow. On the whole, he was proud that he had been selected for the commission, as he liked to think of himself as one to whom things happened which were out of the ordinary course. His only objection to Florence was that she had come to him so much in the ordinary course.

"I suppose the truth is you are tired of our dulness," said his father to him, when he declared his purpose of going up to London, and, in answer to certain questions that were asked him, had hesitated to tell his business.

"Indeed, it is not so," said Harry, earnestly; "but I have a commission to execute for a certain person, and I cannot explain what it is."

"Another secret;—eh, Harry?"

"I am very sorry,—but it is a secret. It is not one of my own seeking; that is all I can say." His mother and sisters also asked him a question or two; but when he became mysterious, they did not persevere. "Of course it is something about Florence," said Fanny. "I'll be bound he is going to meet her. What will you bet me, Harry, you don't go to the play with Florence before you come home?" To this Henry deigned no answer; and after that no more questions were asked.

He went up to London and took rooms in Bolton Street. There was a pretty fresh-looking light drawing-room, or, indeed, two drawing-rooms, and a small dining-room, and a large bed-room looking over upon the trees of some great nobleman's garden. As Harry stood at the window it

seemed so odd to him that he should be there. And he was busy about everything in the chamber, seeing that all things were clean and well ordered. Was the woman of the house sure of her cook? Sure; of course she was sure. Had not old Lady Dimdaff lived there for two years, and nobody ever was so particular about her victuals as Lady Dimdaff. "And would Lady Ongar keep her own carriage?" As to this Harry could say nothing. Then came the question of price, and Harry found his commission very difficult. The sum asked seemed to be enormous. "Seven guineas a week at that time of the year!" Lady Dimdaff had always paid seven guineas. "But that was in the season," suggested Harry. To this the woman replied that it was the season now. Harry felt that he did not like to drive a bargain for the Countess, who would probably care very little what she paid, and therefore assented. But a guinea a day for lodgings did seem a great deal of money. He was prepared to marry and commence housekeeping upon a less sum for all his expenses. However, he had done his commission, had written to Lady Clavering, and had telegraphed to Paris. He had almost brought himself to write to Lady Ongar, but when the moment came he abstained. He had sent the telegram as from H. Clavering. She might think that it came from Hugh if she pleased.

He was unable not to attend specially to his dress when he went to meet her at the Victoria Station. He told himself that he was an ass,—but still he went on being an ass. During the whole afternoon he could do nothing but think of what he had in hand. He was to tell Florence everything, but had Florence known the actual state of his mind, I doubt whether she would have been satisfied with him. The train was due at 8 P.M. He dined at the Oxford and Cambridge Club at six, and then went to his lodgings to take one last look at his outer man. The evening was very fine, but he went down to the station in a cab, because he would not meet Lady Ongar in soiled boots. He told himself again that he was an ass; and then tried to console himself by thinking that such an occasion as this seldom happened once to any man,—could hardly happen more than once to any man. He had hired a carriage for her, not thinking it fit that Lady Ongar should be taken to her new home in a cab; and when he was at the station, half an hour before the proper time, was very fidgety because it had not come. Ten minutes before eight he might have been seen standing at the entrance to the station looking out anxiously for the vehicle. The man was there, of course, in time, but Harry made himself angry because he could not get the carriage so placed that Lady Ongar might be sure of stepping into it without leaving the platform. Punctually to the moment the coming train announced itself by its whistle, and Harry Clavering felt himself to be in a flutter.

The train came up along the platform, and Harry stood there expecting to see Julia Brabazon's head projected from the first window that caught his eye. It was of Julia Brabazon's head, and not of Lady Ongar's, that he was thinking. But he saw no sign of her presence while the carriages

were coming to a stand-still, and the platform was covered with passengers before he discovered her whom he was seeking. At last he encountered in the crowd a man in livery, and found from him that he was Lady Ongar's servant. "I have come to meet Lady Ongar," said Harry, "and have got a carriage for her." Then the servant found his mistress, and Harry offered his hand to a tall woman in black. She wore a black straw hat with a veil, but the veil was so thick that Harry could not at all see her face.

"Is that Mr. Clavering?" said she.

"Yes," said Harry, "it is I. Your sister asked me to take rooms for you, and as I was in town I thought I might as well meet you to see if you wanted anything. Can I get the luggage?"

"Thank you;—the man will do that. He knows where the things are."

"I ordered a carriage;—shall I show him where it is? Perhaps you will let me take you to it? They are so stupid here. They would not let me bring it up."

"It will do very well I'm sure. It's very kind of you. The rooms are in Bolton Street. I have the number here. Oh! thank you." But she would not take his arm. So he led the way, and stood at the door while she got into the carriage with her maid. "I'd better show the man where you are now." This he did, and afterwards shook hands with her through the carriage window. This was all he saw of her, and the words which have been repeated were all that were spoken. Of her face he had not caught a glimpse.

As he went home to his lodgings he was conscious that the interview had not been satisfactory. He could not say what more he wanted, but he felt that there was something amiss. He consoled himself, however, by reminding himself that Florence Burton was the girl whom he had really loved, and not Julia Brabazon. Lady Ongar had given him no invitation to come and see her, and therefore he determined that he would return home on the following day without going near Bolton Street. He had pictured to himself beforehand the sort of description he would give to Lady Clavering of her sister; but, seeing how things had turned out, he made up his mind that he would say nothing of the meeting. Indeed, he would not go up to the great house at all. He had done Lady Clavering's commission,—at some little trouble and expense to himself, and there should be an end of it. Lady Ongar would not mention that she had seen him. He doubted, indeed, whether she would remember whom she had seen. For any good that he had done, or for any sentiment that there had been, his cousin Hugh's butler might as well have gone to the train. In this mood he returned home, consoling himself with the fitness of things which had given him Florence Burton instead of Julia Brabazon for a wife.

CHAPTER VI.

THE REV. SAMUEL SAUL.

DURING Harry's absence in London, a circumstance had occurred at the rectory which had surprised some of them and annoyed others a good deal. Mr. Saul, the curate, had made an offer to Fanny. The Rector and Fanny declared themselves to be both surprised and annoyed. That the Rector was in truth troubled by the thing was very evident. Mrs. Clavering said that she had almost suspected it,—that she was at any rate not surprised; as to the offer itself, of course she was sorry that it should have been made, as it could not suit Fanny to accept it. Mary was surprised, as she had thought Mr. Saul to be wholly intent on other things; but she could not see any reason why the offer should be regarded as being on his part unreasonable.

"How can you say so, mamma?" Such had been Fanny's indignant exclamation when Mrs. Clavering had hinted that Mr. Saul's proceeding had been expected by her.

"Simply because I saw that he liked you, my dear. Men under such circumstances have different ways of showing their liking."

Fanny, who had seen all of Mary's love-affair from the beginning to the end, and who had watched the Reverend Edward Fielding in all his very conspicuous manœuvres, would not agree to this. Edward Fielding from the first moment of his intimate acquaintance with Mary had left no doubt of his intentions on the mind of any one. He had talked to Mary and walked with Mary whenever he was allowed or found it possible to do so. When driven to talk to Fanny, he had always talked about Mary. He had been a lover of the good, old, plainspoken stamp, about whom there had been no mistake. From the first moment of his coming much about Clavering Rectory the only question had been about his income. "I don't think Mr. Saul ever said a word to me except about the poor people and the church services," said Fanny. "That was merely his way," said Mrs. Clavering. "Then he must be a goose," said Fanny. "I am very sorry if I have made him unhappy, but he had no business to come to me in that way."

"I suppose I shall have to look for another curate," said the Rector. But this was said in private to his wife.

"I don't see that at all," said Mrs. Clavering. "With many men it would be so; but I think you will find that he will take an answer, and that there will be an end of it."

Fanny, perhaps, had a right to be indignant, for certainly Mr. Saul had given her no fair warning of his intention. Mary had for some months been intent rather on Mr. Fielding's church matters than on those going on in her own parish, and therefore there had been nothing singular in the fact that Mr. Saul had said more on such matters to Fanny than to her sister. Fanny was eager and active, and as Mr. Saul was very eager and

very active, it was natural that they should have had some interests in common. But there had been no private walkings, and no talkings that could properly be called private. There was a certain book which Fanny kept, containing the names of all the poor people in the parish, to which Mr. Saul had access equally with herself; but its contents were of a most prosaic nature, and when she had sat over it in the rectory drawing-room, with Mr. Saul by her side, striving to extract more than twelve pennies out of charity shillings, she had never thought that it would lead to a declaration of love.

He had never called her Fanny in his life,—not up to the moment when she declined the honour of becoming Mrs. Saul. The offer itself was made in this wise. She had been at the house of old Widow Tubb, half-way between Cumberly Green and the little village of Clavering, striving to make that rheumatic old woman believe that she had not been cheated by a general conspiracy of the parish in the matter of a distribution of coal, when, just as she was about to leave the cottage, Mr. Saul came up. It was then past four, and the evening was becoming dark, and there was, moreover, a slight drizzle of rain. It was not a tempting evening for a walk of a mile and a half through a very dirty lane; but Fanny Clavering did not care much for such things, and was just stepping out into the mud and moisture, with her dress well looped up, when Mr. Saul accosted her.

"I'm afraid you'll be very wet, Miss Clavering."

"That will be better than going without my cup of tea, Mr. Saul, which I should have to do if I stayed any longer with Mrs. Tubb. And I have got an umbrella."

"But it is so dark and dirty," said he.

"I'm used to that, as you ought to know."

"Yes; I do know it," said he, walking on with her. "I do know that nothing ever turns you away from the good work."

There was something in the tone of his voice which Fanny did not like. He had never complimented her before. They had been very intimate and had often scolded each other. Fanny would accuse him of exacting too much from the people, and he would retort upon her that she coddled them. Fanny would often decline to obey him, and he would make angry hints as to his clerical authority. In this way they had worked together pleasantly, without any of the awkwardness which on other terms would have arisen between a young man and a young woman. But now that he began to praise her with some peculiar intention of meaning in his tone, she was confounded. She had made no immediate answer to him, but walked on rapidly through the mud and slush.

"You are very constant," said he; "I have not been two years at Clavering without finding that out." It was becoming worse and worse. It was not so much his words which provoked her as the tone in which they were uttered. And yet she had not the slightest idea of what was

coming. If, thoroughly admiring her devotion and mistaken as to her character, he were to ask her to become a Protestant nun, or suggest to her that she should leave her home and go as nurse into a hospital, then there would have occurred the sort of folly of which she believed him to be capable. Of the folly which he now committed, she had not believed him to be capable.

It had come on to rain hard, and she held her umbrella low over her head. He also was walking with an open umbrella in his hand, so that they were not very close to each other. Fanny, as she stepped on impetuously, put her foot into the depth of a pool, and splashed herself thoroughly.

"Oh dear, oh dear," said she; "this is very disagreeable."

"Miss Clavering," said he, "I have been looking for an opportunity to speak to you, and I do not know when I may find another so suitable as this." She still believed that some proposition was to be made to her which would be disagreeable, and perhaps impertinent,—but it never occurred to her that Mr. Saul was in want of a wife.

"Doesn't it rain too hard for talking?" she said.

"As I have begun I must go on with it now," he replied, raising his voice a little, as though it were necessary that he should do so to make her hear him through the rain and darkness. She moved a little further away from him with unthinking irritation; but still he went on with his purpose. "Miss Clavering, I know that I am ill-suited to play the part of a lover;—very ill suited." Then she gave a start and again splashed herself sadly. "I have never read how it is done in books, and have not allowed my imagination to dwell much on such things."

"Mr. Saul, don't go on; pray don't." Now she did understand what was coming.

"Yea, Miss Clavering, I must go on now; but not on that account would I press you to give me an answer to-day. I have learned to love you, and if you can love me in return, I will take you by the hand, and you shall be my wife. I have found that in you which I have been unable not to love,—not to covet that I may bind it to myself as my own for ever. Will you think of this, and give me an answer when you have considered it fully?"

He had not spoken altogether amiss, and Fanny, though she was very angry with him, was conscious of this. The time he had chosen might not be considered suitable for a declaration of love, nor the place; but having chosen them, he had, perhaps, made the best of them. There had been no hesitation in his voice, and his words had been perfectly audible.

"Oh, Mr. Saul, of course I can assure you at once," said Fanny. "There need not be any consideration. I really have never thought——" Fanny, who knew her own mind on the matter thoroughly, was hardly able to express herself plainly and without incivility. As soon as that phrase "of course" had passed her lips, she felt that it

should not have been spoken. There was no need that she should insult him by telling him that such a proposition from him could have but one answer.

"No, Miss Clavering; I know you have never thought of it, and therefore it would be well that you should take time. I have not been able to make manifest to you by little signs, as men do who are less awkward, all the love that I have felt for you. Indeed, could I have done so, I should still have hesitated till I had thoroughly resolved that I might be better with a wife than without one; and had resolved also, as far as that might be possible for me, that you also would be better with a husband."

"Mr. Saul, really that should be for me to think of."

"And for me also. Can any man offer to marry a woman,—to bind a woman for life to certain duties, and to so close an obligation without thinking whether such bonds would be good for her as well as for himself? Of course you must think for yourself;—and so have I thought for you. You should think for yourself, and you should think also for me."

Fanny was quite aware that as regarded herself, the matter was one which required no more thinking. Mr. Saul was not a man with whom she could bring herself to be in love. She had her own ideas as to what was loveable in men, and the eager curate, splashing through the rain by her side, by no means came up to her standard of excellence. She was unconsciously aware that he had altogether mistaken her character, and given her credit for more abnegation of the world than she pretended to possess, or was desirous of possessing. Fanny Clavering was in no hurry to get married. I do not know that she had even made up her mind that marriage would be a good thing for her; but she had an untroubled conviction that if she did marry, her husband should have a house and an income. She had no reliance on her own power of living on a potato, and with one new dress every year. A comfortable home, with nice, comfortable things around her, ease in money matters, and elegance in life, were charms with which she had not quarrelled, and, though she did not wish to be hard upon Mr. Saul on account of his mistake, she did feel that in making his proposition he had blundered. Because she chose to do her duty as a parish clergyman's daughter, he thought himself entitled to regard her as devotée, who would be willing to resign everything to become the wife of a clergyman, who was active, indeed, but who had not one shilling of income beyond his curacy. "Mr. Saul," she said, "I can assure you I need take no time for further thinking. It cannot be as you would have it."

"Perhaps I have been abrupt. Indeed, I feel that it is so, though I did not know how to avoid it."

"It would have made no difference. Indeed, indeed, Mr. Saul, nothing of that kind could have made a difference."

"Will you grant me this;—that I may speak to you again on the same subject after six months?"

"It cannot do any good."

"It will do this good;—that for so much time you will have had the idea before you." Fanny thought that she would have Mr. Saul himself before her, and that that would be enough. Mr. Saul, with his rusty clothes and his thick, dirty shoes, and his weak, blinking eyes, and his mind always set upon the one wish of his life, could not be made to present himself to her in the guise of a lover. He was one of those men of whom women become very fond with the fondness of friendship, but from whom young women seem to be as far removed in the way of love as though they belonged to some other species. "I will not press you further," said he, "as I gather by your tone that it distresses you."

"I am so sorry if I distress you, but really, Mr. Saul, I could give you,—I never could give you any other answer."

Then they walked on silently through the rain,—silently, without a single word,—for more than half a mile, till they reached the rectory gate. Here it was necessary that they should, at any rate, speak to each other, and for the last three hundred yards Fanny had been trying to find the words which would be suitable. But he was the first to break the silence. "Good-night, Miss Clavering," he said, stopping and putting out his hand.

"Good-night, Mr. Saul."

"I hope that there may be no difference in our bearing to each other, because of what I have to-day said to you?"

"Not on my part;—that is, if you will forget it."

"No, Miss Clavering; I shall not forget it. If it had been a thing to be forgotten, I should not have spoken. I certainly shall not forget it."

"You know what I mean, Mr. Saul."

"I shall not forget it even in the way that you mean. But still I think you need not fear me, because you know that I love you. I think I can promise that you need not withdraw yourself from me, because of what has passed. But you will tell your father and your mother, and of course will be guided by them. And now, good-night." Then he went, and she was astonished at finding that he had had much the best of it in his manner of speaking and conducting himself. She had refused him very curtly, and he had borne it well. He had not been abashed, nor had he become sulky, nor had he tried to melt her by mention of his own misery. In truth he had done it very well,—only that he should have known better than to make any such attempt at all.

Mr. Saul had been right in one thing. Of course she told her mother, and of course her mother told her father. Before dinner that evening the whole affair was being debated in the family conclave. They all agreed that Fanny had had no alternative but to reject the proposition at once. That, indeed, was so thoroughly taken for granted, that the point was not discussed. But there came to be a difference between the Rector and Fanny on one side, and Mrs. Clavering and Mary on the other. "Upon

my word," said the Rector, "I think it was very impertinent." Fanny would not have liked to use that word herself, but she loved her father for using it.

"I do not see that," said Mrs. Clavering. "He could not know what Fanny's views in life might be. Curates very often marry out of the houses of the clergymen with whom they are placed, and I do not see why Mr. Saul should be debarred from the privilege of trying."

"If he had got to like Fanny what else was he to do?" said Mary.

"Oh, Mary, don't talk such nonsense," said Fanny. "Got to like! People shouldn't get to like people unless there's some reason for it."

"What on earth did he intend to live on?" demanded the Rector.

"Edward had nothing to live on, when you first allowed him to come here," said Mary.

"But Edward had prospects, and Saul, as far as I know, has none. He had given no one the slightest notice. If the man in the moon had come to Fanny I don't suppose she would have been more surprised."

"Not half so much, papa."

Then it was that Mrs. Clavering had declared that she was not surprised,—that she had suspected it, and had almost made Fanny angry by saying so. When Harry came back two days afterwards, the family news was imparted to him, and he immediately ranged himself on his father's side. "Upon my word I think that he ought to be forbidden the house," said Harry. "He has forgotten himself in making such a proposition."

"That's nonsense, Harry," said his mother. "If he can be comfortable coming here, there can be no reason why he should be uncomfortable. It would be an injustice to him to ask him to go, and a great trouble to your father to find another curate that would suit him so well." There could be no doubt whatever as to the latter proposition, and therefore it was quietly argued that Mr. Saul's fault, if there had been a fault, should be condoned. On the next day he came to the rectory, and they were all astonished at the ease with which he bore himself. It was not that he affected any special freedom of manner, or that he altogether avoided any change in his mode of speaking to them. A slight blush came upon his sallow face as he first spoke to Mrs. Clavering, and he hardly did more than say a single word to Fanny. But he carried himself as though conscious of what he had done, but in no degree ashamed of the doing it. The Rector's manner to him was stiff and formal;—seeing which Mrs. Clavering spoke to him gently, and with a smile. "I saw you were a little hard on him, and therefore I tried to make up for it," said she afterwards. "You were quite right," said the husband. "You always are. But I wish he had not made such a fool of himself. It will never be the same thing with him again." Harry hardly spoke to Mr. Saul the first time he met him, all of which Mr. Saul understood perfectly.

"Clavering," he said to Harry, a day or two after this, "I hope there is to be no difference between you and me."

"Difference ! I don't know what you mean by difference."

"We were good friends, and I hope that we are to remain so. No doubt you know what has taken place between me and your sister."

"Oh, yes ;—I have been told, of course."

"What I mean is, that I hope you are not going to quarrel with me on that account ? What I did, is it not what you would have done in my position ?—only you would have done it successfully ?"

"I think a fellow should have some income, you know."

"Can you say that you would have waited for income before you spoke of marriage ?"

"I think it might have been better that you should have gone to my father."

"It may be that that is the rule in such things, but if so I do not know it. Would she have liked that better ?"

"Well ;—I can't say."

"You are engaged ? Did you go to the young lady's family first ?"

"I can't say I did ; but I think I had given them some ground to expect it. I fancy they all knew what I was about. But it's over now, and I don't know that we need say anything more about it."

"Certainly not. Nothing can be said that would be of any use ; but I do not think I have done anything that you should resent."

"Resent is a strong word. I don't resent it, or, at any rate, I won't ; and there may be an end of it." After this, Harry was more gracious with Mr. Saul, having an idea that the curate had made some sort of apology for what he had done. But that, I fancy, was by no means Mr. Saul's view of the case. Had he offered to marry the daughter of the Archbishop of Canterbury, instead of the daughter of the Rector of Clavering, he would not have imagined that his doing so needed an apology.

The day after his return from London Lady Clavering sent for Harry up to the house. "So you saw my sister in London ?" she said.

"Yes," said Harry blushing ; "as I was in town, I thought that I might as well meet her. But, as you said, Lady Ongar is able to do without much assistance of that kind. I only just saw her."

"Julia took it so kindly of you ; but she seems surprised that you did not come to her the following day. She thought you would have called."

"Oh, dear, no. I fancied that she would be too tired and too busy to wish to see any mere acquaintance."

"Ah, Harry, I see that she has angered you," said Lady Clavering ; "otherwise you would not talk about mere acquaintance."

"Not in the least. Angered me ! How could she anger me ? What I meant was that at such a time she would probably wish to see no one but people on business,—unless it was some one near to her, like yourself or Hugh."

"Hugh will not go to her."

"But you will do so; will you not?"

"Before long I will. You don't seem to understand, Harry,—and, perhaps, it would be odd if you did,—that I can't run up to town and back as I please. I ought not to tell you this, I dare say, but one feels as though one wanted to talk to some one about one's affairs. At the present moment, I have not the money to go,—even if there were no other reason." These last words she said almost in a whisper, and then she looked up into the young man's face, to see what he thought of the communication she had made him.

"Oh, money!" he said. "You could soon get money. But I hope it won't be long before you go."

On the next morning but one a letter came by the post for him from Lady Ongar. When he saw the handwriting, which he knew, his heart was at once in his mouth, and he hesitated to open his letter at the breakfast-table. He did open it and read it, but, in truth, he hardly understood it or digested it till he had taken it away with him up to his own room. The letter, which was very short, was as follows:—

DEAR FRIEND,

I FELT your kindness in coming to me at the station so much!—the more, perhaps, because others, who owed me more kindness, have paid me less. Don't suppose that I allude to poor Hermione, for, in truth, I have no intention to complain of her. I thought, perhaps, you would have come to see me before you left London; but I suppose you were hurried. I hear from Clavering that you are to be up about your new profession in a day or two. Pray come and see me before you have been many days in London. I shall have so much to say to you! The rooms you have taken are everything that I wanted, and I am so grateful!

Yours ever,
J. O.

When Harry had read and had digested this, he became aware that he was again fluttered. "Poor creature!" he said to himself; "it is sad to think how much she is in want of a friend."

The Study of Celtic Literature.

PART I.

THE summer before last I spent some weeks at Llandudno, on the Welsh coast. The best lodging-houses at Llandudno look eastward, towards Liverpool; and from that Saxon hive swarms are incessantly issuing, crossing the bay, and taking possession of the beach and the lodging-houses. Guarded by the Great and Little Orme's Head, and alive with the Saxon invaders from Liverpool, the eastern bay is an attractive point of interest, and many visitors to Llandudno never contemplate anything else. But, putting aside the charm of the Liverpool steamboats, perhaps the view, on this side, a little dissatisfies one after a while; the horizon wants mystery, the sea wants beauty, the coast wants verdure, and has a too bare austerity and aridity. At last one turns round and looks westward. Everything is changed. Over the mouth of the Conway and its sands is the eternal softness and mild light of the west; the low line of the mystic Anglesey, and the precipitous Penmaenmawr, and the great group of Carnedd Llewelyn and Carnedd David and their brethren fading away, hill behind hill, in an aerial haze, make the horizon: between the foot of Penmaenmawr and the bending coast of Anglesey, the sea, a silver stream, disappears one knows not whither. On this side, Wales,—Wales, where the past still lives, where every place has its tradition, every name its poetry, and where the people, the genuine people, still knows this past, this tradition, this poetry, and lives with it, and clings to it; while, alas, the prosperous Saxon on the other side, the invader from Liverpool and Birkenhead, has long ago forgotten his. And the promontory where Llandudno stands is the very centre of this tradition; it is Creuddyn, *the bloody city*, where every stone has its story; there, opposite its decaying rival, Conway Castle, is Diganwy, not decaying but long since utterly decayed, some crumbling foundations on a crag-top and nothing more;—Diganwy, where Mael-gwyn shut up Elphin, and where Taliesin came to free him. Below, in a fold of the hill, is Llan-rhos, the church of the marsh, where the same Mael-gwyn, a British prince of real history, a bold and licentious chief, the original, it is said, of Arthur's Lancelot, shut himself up in the church to avoid the Yellow Plague, and peeped out through a hole in the door, and saw the monster and died. Behind among the woods, is Glod-daeth, *the place of feasting*, where the bards were entertained; and further away, up the valley of the Conway towards Llanrwst, is the Lake of Ceirionydd and Taliesin's grave. Or, again, looking seawards and Anglesey-wards, you have Pen-mon, Seiriol's isle and priory, where Mael-gwyn lies buried; you have the *Sands of*

Lamentation and Llys Helig, *Helig's Mansion*, a mansion under the waves, a sea-buried palace and realm. *Hac ibat Simois; hic est Sigeia tellus.*

As I walked up and down, last August year, looking at the waves as they washed this Sigeian land which has never had its Homer, and listening with curiosity to the strange, unfamiliar speech of its old possessors' obscure descendants, bathing people, vegetable-sellers, and donkey boys, who were all about me,—suddenly I heard, through the stream of unknown Welsh, words, not English, indeed, but still familiar. They came from a French nursery-maid, with some children. Profoundly ignorant of her relationship, this Gaulish Celt moved among her British cousins, speaking her polite neo-Latin tongue, and full of compassionate contempt, probably, for the Welsh barbarians and their jargon. What a revolution was here! How had the star of this daughter of Gomer waxed, while the star of these Gymry, his sons, had waned! What a difference of fortune in the two, since the days when, speaking the same language, they left their common dwelling-place in the heart of Asia; since the Cimmerians of the Euxine came in upon their western kinsmen, the sons of the giant Galates; since the sisters, Gaul and Britain, cut the mistletoe in their forests, and saw the coming of Cæsar! *Blanc, rouge, rocher, champ, église, seigneur*,—these words, by which the Gallo-Roman Celt now names white, and red, and rock, and field, and church, and lord, are no part of the speech of his true ancestors, they are words he has learnt; but since he learnt them they have had a world-wide success, and we all teach them to our children, and armies speaking them have domineered in every city of that Germany by which the British Celt was broken, and in the train of these armies, Saxon auxiliaries, a humbled contingent, have been fain to follow;—the poor Welshman still says, in the genuine tongue of his ancestors, *gwyn, goch, craig, maes, llan, arglwydd*; but his land is a province, and his history petty, and his Saxon subduers scout his speech as an obstacle to civilization; and the echo of all its kindred in other lands is growing every day fainter and more feeble; gone in Cornwall, going in Brittany and the Scotch Highlands, going, too, in Ireland;—and there, above all, the badge of the beaten race, the property of the vanquished.

But the Celtic genius was just then preparing, in Llandudno, to have its hour of revival. Workmen were busy in putting up a large tent-like wooden building, which attracted the eye of every new-comer, and which my little boys believed (their wish, no doubt, being father to their belief,) to be a circus. It turned out, however, to be no circus for Castor and Pollux, but a temple for Apollo and the Muses. It was the place where the Eisteddfod, or Bardic Congress of Wales, was about to be held; a meeting which has for its object (I quote the words of its promoters) “the diffusion of useful knowledge, the eliciting of native talent, and the cherishing of love of home and honourable fame by the cultivation of poetry, music, and art.” My little boys were disappointed; but I, whose circus days are over, I, who have a professional interest in poetry, and

who, also, hating all one-sidedness and oppression, wish nothing better than that the Celtic genius should be able to show itself to the world and to make its voice heard, was delighted. I took my ticket, and waited impatiently for the day of opening. The day came, an unfortunate one; storms of wind, clouds of dust, an angry, dirty sea. The Saxons who arrived by the Liverpool steamers looked miserable; even the Welsh who arrived by land,—whether they were discomposed by the bad morning, or by the monstrous and crushing tax which the London and North-Western Railway Company levies on all whom it transports across those four miles of marshy peninsula between Conway and Llandudno,—did not look happy. First we went to the Gorsedd, or preliminary congress for conferring the degree of bard. The Gorsedd was held in the open air, at the windy corner of a street, and the morning was not favourable to open-air solemnities. The Welsh, too, share, it seems to me, with their Saxon invaders, an inaptitude for show and spectacle. Show and spectacle are better managed by the Latin race, and those whom it has moulded; the Welsh, like us, are a little awkward and resourceless in the organization of a festival. The presiding genius of the mystic circle, in our hideous nineteenth century costume relieved only by a green scarf, the wind drowning his voice and the dust powdering his whiskers, looked thoroughly wretched; so did the aspirants for bardic honours; and I believe, after about an hour of it, we all of us, as we stood shivering round the sacred stones, began half to wish for the Druid's sacrificial knife to end our sufferings. But the Druid's knife is gone from his hands; so we sought the shelter of the Eisteddfod building.

The sight inside was not lively. The president and his supporters mustered strong on the platform. On the floor the one or two front benches were pretty well filled, but their occupants were for the most part Saxons, who came there from curiosity, not from enthusiasm; and all the middle and back benches, where should have been the true enthusiasts,—the Welsh people,—were nearly empty. The president, I am sure, showed a national spirit which was admirable. He addressed us Saxons in our own language, and called us "the English branch of the descendants of the ancient Britons." We received the compliment with the impassive dulness which is the characteristic of our nature; and the lively Celtic nature, which should have made up for the dulness of ours, was absent. A lady who sat by me, and who was the wife, I found, of a distinguished bard on the platform, told me, with emotion in her look and voice, how dear were these solemnities to the heart of her people, how deep was the interest which was aroused by them. I believe her, but still the whole performance, on that particular morning, was incurably lifeless. The recitation of the prize compositions began: pieces of verse and prose in the Welsh language, an essay on punctuality being, if I remember right, one of them; a poem on the march of Havelock, another. This went on for some time. Then Dr. Vaughan,—the well-known Nonconformist minister, a Welshman, and a good patriot,—addressed us in English. His

speech was a powerful one, and he succeeded, I confess, in sending a faint thrill through our front benches ; but it was the old familiar thrill which we have all of us felt a thousand times in Saxon chapels and meeting-halls, and had nothing bardic about it. I stepped out, and in the street I came across an acquaintance fresh from London and the parliamentary session. In a moment the spell of the Celtic genius was forgotten, the Philistinism of our Saxon nature made itself felt ; and my friend and I walked up and down by the roaring waves, talking not of ovates and bards ; and triads and englyns, but of the sewage question, and the glories of our local self-government, and the mysterious perfections of the Metropolitan Board of Works.

I believe it is admitted, even by the admirers of Eisteddfods in general, that this particular Eisteddfod was not a success. Llandudno, it is said, was not the right place for it. Held in Conway Castle, as a few years ago it was, and its spectators,—an enthusiastic multitude,—filling the grand old ruin, I can imagine it a most impressive and interesting sight, even to a stranger labouring under the terrible disadvantage of being ignorant of the Welsh language. But even seen as I saw it at Llandudno, it had the power to set one thinking. An Eisteddfod is, no doubt, a kind of Olympic meeting ; and that the common people of Wales should care for such a thing, shows something Greek in them, something spiritual, something humane, something (I am afraid one must add) which in the English common people is not to be found. This line of reflection has been followed by the accomplished Bishop of St. David's, and by the *Saturday Review* : it is just, it is fruitful, and those who pursued it merit our best thanks. But, from peculiar circumstances, the Llandudno meeting was, as I have said, such as not at all to suggest ideas of Olympia, and of a multitude touched by the divine flame, and hanging on the lips of Pindar. It rather suggested the triumph of the prosaic, practical Saxon, and the approaching extinction of an enthusiasm which he derides as factitious, a literature which he disdains as trash, a language which he detests as a nuisance.

I must say I quite share the opinion of my brother Saxons as to the practical inconvenience of perpetuating the speaking of Welsh. It may cause a moment's distress to one's imagination when one hears that the last Cornish peasant who spoke the old tongue of Cornwall is dead ; but, no doubt, Cornwall is the better for adopting English, for becoming more thoroughly one with the rest of the country. The fusion of all the inhabitants of these islands into one homogeneous, English-speaking whole, the breaking down of barriers between us, the swallowing up of separate provincial nationalities, is a consummation to which the natural course of things irresistibly tends ; it is a necessity of what is called modern civilization, and modern civilization is a real, legitimate force ; the change must come, and its accomplishment is a mere affair of time. The sooner the Welsh language disappears as an instrument of the practical, political, social life of Wales, the better ; the better for England,

the better for Wales itself. Traders and tourists do excellent service by pushing the English wedge further and further into the heart of the principality; government, by hammering it harder and harder into the elementary schools. Nor, perhaps, can one have much sympathy with the literary cultivation of Welsh as an instrument of living literature; and in this respect Eisteddfods encourage, I think, a fantastic and mischief-working delusion. For all serious purposes in modern literature (and trifling purposes in it who would care to encourage?) the language of a Welshman is and must be English; if an Eisteddfod author has anything to say about punctuality or about the march of Havelock, he had much better say it in English; or rather, perhaps, what he has to say on these subjects may as well be said in Welsh, but the moment he has anything of real importance to say, anything the world will the least care to hear, he must speak English. Dilettantism might possibly do much harm here, might mislead and waste and bring to nought a genuine talent. For all modern purposes, I repeat, let us all as soon as possible be one people; let the Welshman speak English, and, if he is an author, let him write English.

So far, I go along with the stream of my brother Saxons; but here, I imagine, I part company with them. They will have nothing to do with the Welsh language and literature on any terms; they would gladly make a clean sweep of it from the face of the earth. I, on certain terms, wish to make a great deal more of it than is made now; and I regard the Welsh literature,—or rather, dropping the distinction between Welsh and Irish, Gaels and Cymris, let me say Celtic literature,—as an object of very great interest. My brother Saxons have, as is well known, a terrible way with them of wanting to improve everything but themselves off the face of the earth; I have no such passion for finding nothing but myself everywhere; I like variety to exist and to show itself to me, and I would not for the world have the lineaments of the Celtic genius lost. But I know my brother Saxons, I know their strength, and I know that the Celtic genius will make nothing of trying to set up barriers against them in the world of fact and brute force, of trying to hold its own against them as a political and social counter-power, as the soul of a hostile nationality. To me there is something mournful (and at this moment, when one sees what is going on in Ireland, how well may one say so!) in hearing a Welshman or an Irishman make pretensions,—natural pretensions, I admit, but how hopelessly vain!—to such a rival self-establishment; there is something mournful in hearing an Englishman scout them. Strength! alas, it is not strength, strength in the material world, which is wanting to us Saxons; we have plenty of strength for swallowing up and absorbing as much as we choose; there is nothing to hinder us from effacing the last poor material remains of that Celtic power which once was everywhere, but has long since, in the race of civilization, fallen out of sight. We may threaten them with extinction if we will, and may almost say in so threatening them, like Cæsar in threatening with death the tribune

Metellus, who closed the treasury doors against him: "And when I threaten this, young man, to threaten it is more trouble to me than to do it." It is not in the outward and visible world of material life, that the Celtic genius of Wales or Ireland can at this day hope to count for much; it is in the inward world of thought and science. What it *has* been, what it *has* done, let it ask us to attend to that, as a matter of science and history; not to what it will be or will do, as a matter of modern politics. It cannot count appreciably now as a material power; but, perhaps, if it can get itself thoroughly known as an object of science, it may count for a good deal,—far more than we Saxons, most of us, imagine,—as a spiritual power.

The bent of our time is towards science, towards knowing things as they are; so the Celt's claims towards having his genius and its works fairly treated, as objects of scientific investigation, the Saxon can hardly reject when these claims are urged simply on their own merits, and are not mixed up with extraneous pretensions which jeopardize them. What the French call the *science des origines*, the science of origins,—a science which is at the bottom of all real knowledge of the actual world, and which is every day growing in interest and importance,—is very incomplete without a thorough critical account of the Celts, and their genius, language, and literature. This science has still great progress to make, but its progress, made even within the recollection of those of us who are in middle life, has already affected our common notions about the Celtic race; and this change, too, shows how science, the knowing things as they are, may even have salutary practical consequences. I remember when I was young I was taught to think of Celt as separated by an impassable gulf from Teuton; my father, in particular, was never weary of contrasting them; he insisted much oftener on the separation between us and them than on the separation between us and any other race in the world; in the same way Lord Lyndhurst, in words long famous, called the Irish, "aliens in speech, in religion, in blood." This naturally created a profound sense of estrangement; it doubled the estrangement which political and religious differences already made between us and the Irish: it seemed to make this estrangement immense, incurable, fatal. It begot a strange reluctance, as any one may see by reading the preface to the great text-book for Welsh poetry, the *Myvyrian Archaeology*, published at the beginning of this century, to further,—nay, allow,—even among quiet, peaceable people like the Welsh, the publication of the documents of their ancient literature, the monuments of the Cymric genius; such was the sense of repulsion, the sense of incompatibility, of radical antagonism, making it seem dangerous to us to let such opposites to ourselves have speech and utterance. Certainly the Jew,—the Jew of ancient times, at least,—then seemed a thousand degrees nearer than the Celt to us. Puritanism had so assimilated Bible ideas and phraseology; names like Ebenezer, and notions like that of hewing Agag in pieces, came so natural to us, that the sense of affinity between the Teutonic and the Hebrew nature was quite strong;

a steady, middle-class Anglo-Saxon much more imagined himself Ehud's cousin than Ossian's. But meanwhile, the pregnant and striking ideas of the ethnologists about the true natural grouping of the human race, the doctrine of a great Indo-European unity, comprising Hindoos, Persians, Greeks, Latins, Celts, Teutons, Slavonians, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, of a Semitic unity and of a Mongolian unity, separated by profound distinguishing marks from the Indo-European unity and from one another, was slowly acquiring consistency and popularizing itself. So strong and real could the sense of sympathy or antipathy, grounded upon real identity or diversity in race, grow in men of culture, that we read of a genuine Teuton,—Wilhelm von Humboldt,—finding, even in the sphere of religion, that sphere where the might of Semitism has been so overpowering, the food which most truly suited his spirit in the productions not of the alien Semitic genius, but of the genius of Greece or India, the Teuton's born kinsfolk of the common Indo-European family. "Towards Semitism he felt himself," we read, "far less drawn;" he had the consciousness of a certain antipathy in the depths of his nature to this, and to its "absorbing, tyrannous, terrorist religion," as to the opener, more flexible Indo-European genius, this religion appeared. "The mere workings of the old man in him!" Semitism will readily reply; and though one can hardly admit this short and easy method of settling the matter, it must be owned that Humboldt's is an extreme case of Indo-Europeanism, useful as letting us see what may be the power of race and primitive constitution, but not likely, in the spiritual sphere, to have many companion cases equalling it. Still, even in this sphere, the tendency is in Humboldt's direction; the modern spirit tends more and more to establish a sense of native diversity between our European bent and the Semitic bent, and to eliminate, even in our religion, certain elements as purely and excessively Semitic, and therefore, in right, not combinable with our European nature, not assimilable by it. This tendency is now quite visible even among ourselves, and even, as I have said, within the great sphere of the Semitic genius, the sphere of religion; and for its justification this tendency appeals to science, the science of origins; it appeals to this science as teaching us which way our natural affinities and repulsions lie. It appeals to this science, and in part it comes from it; it is, in considerable part, an indirect practical result from it. In the sphere of politics, too, there has, in the same way, appeared an indirect practical result from this science; the sense of antipathy to the Irish people, of radical estrangement from them, has visibly abated amongst all the better part of us; the remorse for past ill-treatment of them, the wish to make amends, to do them justice, to fairly unite, if possible, in one people with them, has visibly increased; hardly a book on Ireland is now published, hardly a debate on Ireland now passes in Parliament, without this appearing. Fanciful as the notion may at first seem, I am inclined to think that the march of science,—science insisting that there is no such original chasm between the Celt and the Saxon as we once popularly imagined, that they

are not truly, what Lord Lyndhurst called them, *aliens in blood* from us, that they are our brothers in the great Indo-European family,—has had a share, an appreciable share, in producing this changed state of feeling. No doubt, the release from alarm and struggle, the sense of firm possession, solid security, and overwhelming power; no doubt these, allowing and encouraging humane feelings to spring up in us, have done much; no doubt a state of fear and danger, Ireland in hostile conflict with us, our union violently disturbed, might, while it drove back all humane feelings, make also the old sense of utter estrangement revive. Nevertheless, so long as such a malignant revolution of events does not actually come about, so long the new sense of kinship and kindness lives, works, and gathers strength; and the longer it so lives and works, the more it makes any such malignant revolution improbable. And this new, reconciling sense has, I say, its roots in science.

However, on these indirect benefits of science we must not lay too much stress. Only this must be allowed; it is clear that there are now in operation two influences, both favourable to a more attentive and impartial study of Celtism than it has yet ever received from us. One is, the strengthening in us of the feeling of Indo-Europeanism; the other, the strengthening in us of the scientific sense generally. The first breaks down barriers between us and the Celt, relaxes the estrangement between us; the second begets the desire to know his case thoroughly, and to be just to it. This is a very different matter from the political and social Celtization of which certain enthusiasts dream; but it is not to be despised by any one to whom the Celtic genius is dear; and it is possible, while the other is not.

To know the Celtic case thoroughly, one must know the Celtic people; and to know them, one must know that by which a people best express themselves,—their literature. Few of us have any notion what a mass of Celtic literature is really yet extant and accessible. One constantly finds even very accomplished people, who fancy that the remains of Welsh and Irish literature are as inconsiderable by their volume, as, in their opinion, they are by their intrinsic merit; that these remains consist of a few prose stories, in great part borrowed from the literature of nations more civilized than the Welsh or Irish nation, and of some unintelligible poetry. As to Welsh literature, they have heard, perhaps, of the *Black Book of Caermarthen*, or of the *Red Book of Hergest*, and they imagine that one or two famous manuscript books like these contain the whole matter. They have no notion that, in real truth, to quote the words of one who is no friend to the high pretensions of Welsh literature, but their most formidable impugner, Mr. Nash:—"The Myvyrian manuscripts alone, now deposited in the British Museum, amount to 47 volumes of poetry, of various sizes, containing about 4,700 pieces of poetry, in 16,000 pages, besides about 2,000 englynion or epigrammatic stanzas. There are also in the same collection, 53 volumes of prose, in about 15,800 pages, containing a great many curious documents on various subjects.

Besides these, which were purchased of the widow of the celebrated Owen Jones, the editor of the *Myvyrian Archaeology*, there are a vast number of collections of Welsh manuscripts in London, and in the libraries of the gentry of the principality." The *Myvyrian Archaeology* here spoken of by Mr. Nash, I have already mentioned: he calls its editor, Owen Jones, celebrated; he is not so celebrated but that he claims a word, in passing, from a professor of poetry. He was a Denbighshire peasant, born before the middle of the last century, in that vale of Myvyr, which has given its name to his archaeology. From his childhood he had that passion for the old treasures of his country's literature, which to this day, as I have said, in the common people of Wales is so remarkable; these treasures were unprinted, scattered, difficult of access, jealously guarded. "More than once," says Edward Lhuyd, who in his *Archæologia Britannica*, brought out by him in 1707, would gladly have given them to the world, "more than once I had a promise from the owner, and the promise was afterwards retracted at the instigation of certain persons, pseudo-politicians, as I think, rather than men of letters." So OWEN JONES went up, a young man of nineteen, to London, and got employment in a furrier's shop in Thames Street; for forty years, with a single object in view, he worked at his business; and at the end of that time his object was won. He had risen in his employment till the business had become his own, and he was now a man of considerable means; but those means had been sought by him for one purpose only, the purpose of his life, the dream of his youth,—the giving permanence and publicity to the treasures of his national literature. Gradually he got manuscript after manuscript transcribed, and at last, in 1801, he jointly with two friends brought out in three large volumes, printed in double columns, his *Myvyrian Archaeology of Wales*. The book is full of imperfections, it presented itself to a public which could not judge of its importance, and it brought upon its author, in his life-time, more attack than honour. He died not long afterwards, and now he lies buried in All-hallows Church, in London, with his tomb turned towards the east, away from the green vale of Clwyd and the mountains of his native Wales; but his book is the great repertory of the literature of his nation, the comparative study of languages and literatures gains every day more followers, and no one of these followers, at home or abroad, touches Welsh literature without paying homage to the Denbighshire peasant's name; if the bards' glory and his own are still matter of moment to him,—*si quid mentem mortalia tangunt*,—he may be satisfied.

Even the printed stock of early Welsh literature is, therefore, considerable, and the manuscript stock of it is very great indeed. Of Irish literature, the stock, printed and manuscript, is truly vast; the work of cataloguing and describing this has been admirably performed by another remarkable man, who died only the other day, Mr. Eugene O'Curry. Obscure Scaliger of a despised literature, he deserves some weightier voice to praise him than the voice of an unlearned belletristic trifler like me; he belongs to the race of the giants in literary research and industry,—a

race now almost extinct. Without a literary education, and impeded too, it appears, by much trouble of mind and infirmity of body, he has accomplished such a thorough work of classification and description for the chaotic mass of Irish literature, that the student has now half his labour saved, and needs only to use his materials as Eugene O'Curry hands them to him. It was as a professor in the Catholic University in Dublin that O'Curry gave the lectures in which he has done the student this service; it is touching to find that these lectures, a splendid tribute of devotion to the Celtic cause, had no hearer more attentive, more sympathizing, than a man, himself, too, the champion of a cause more interesting than prosperous,—one of those causes which please noble spirits, but do not please Destiny, which have Cato's adherence, but not Heaven's,—Dr. Newman. Eugene O'Curry, in these lectures of his, taking as his standard the quarto page of Dr. O'Donovan's edition of the *Annals of the Four Masters* (and this printed monument of one branch of Irish literature occupies by itself, let me say in passing, seven large quarto volumes, containing 4,215 pages of closely printed matter), Eugene O'Curry says, that the great vellum manuscript books belonging to Trinity College, Dublin, and to the Royal Irish Academy,—books with fascinating titles, the *Book of the Dun Cow*, the *Book of Leinster*, the *Book of Ballymote*, the *Speckled Book*, the *Book of Lecain*, the *Yellow Book of Lecain*,—have, between them, matter enough to fill 11,400 of these pages; the other vellum manuscripts in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, have matter enough to fill 8,200 pages more; and the paper manuscripts of Trinity College, and the Royal Irish Academy together, would fill, he says, 30,000 such pages more. The ancient laws of Ireland, the so-called Brehon laws, which a commission is now publishing, were not yet completely transcribed when O'Curry wrote; but what had even then been transcribed was sufficient, he says, to fill nearly 8,000 of Dr. O'Donovan's pages. Here are, at any rate, materials enough with a vengeance. These materials fall, of course, into several divisions. The most literary of these divisions, the *Tales*, consisting of *Historic Tales* and *Imaginative Tales*, distributes the contents of its *Historic Tales* as follows:—Battles, voyages, sieges, tragedies, cow-spoils, courtships, adventures, land-expeditions, sea-expeditions, banquets, elopements, loves, lake-irruptions, colonizations, visions. Of what a treasure-house of resources for the history of Celtic life and the Celtic genius does that bare list, even by itself, call up the image! The *Annals of the Four Masters* give “the years of foundations and destructions of churches and castles, the obituaries of remarkable persons, the inaugurations of kings, the battles of chiefs, the contests of clans, the ages of bards, abbots, bishops, &c.”* Through other divisions of this mass of materials,—the books of pedigrees and genealogies, the martyrologies and festologies, such as the *Féilid of Angus the Culdee*, the topographical tracts, such as the *Dinnsenchas*,—we touch “the most ancient traditions of the Irish, traditions which were committed to writing at a period when the ancient

* Dr. O'Connor in his *Catalogue of the Stowe MSS.* (quoted by O'Curry).

customs of the people were unbroken." We touch "the early history of Ireland, civil and ecclesiastical." We get "the origin and history of the countless monuments of Ireland, of the ruined church and tower, the sculptured cross, the holy well, and the commemorative name of almost every townland and parish in the whole island." We get, in short, "the most detailed information upon almost every part of ancient Gaelic life, a vast quantity of valuable details of life and manners." *

And then, besides, to our knowledge of the Celtic genius, Mr. Norris has brought us from Cornwall, M. de la Villemarqué from Brittany, contributions, insignificant indeed in quantity, if one compares them with the mass of the Irish materials extant, but far from insignificant in value.

We want to know what all this mass of documents really tells us about the Celt. But the mode of dealing with these documents, and with the whole question of Celtic antiquity, has hitherto been most unsatisfactory. Those who have dealt with them, have gone to work, in general, either as warm Celt-lovers or as warm Celt-haters, and not as disinterested students of an important matter of science. One party seems to set out with the determination to find everything in Celtism and its remains; the other, with the determination to find nothing in them. A simple seeker for truth has a hard time of it between the two. An illustration or so will make clear what I mean. First let us take the Celt-lovers, who, though they engage one's sympathies more than the Celt-haters, yet, inasmuch as assertion is more dangerous than denial, show their weaknesses in a more signal way. A very learned man, the Rev. Edward Davies, published in the early part of this century two important books on Celtic antiquity. The second of these books, *The Mythology and Rites of the British Druids*, contains, with much other interesting matter, the charming story of Taliesin. Bryant's book on mythology was then in vogue, and Bryant, in the fantastical manner so common in those days, found in Greek mythology what he called an arkite idolatry, pointing to Noah's deluge and the ark. Davies, wishing to give dignity to his Celtic mythology, determines to find the arkite idolatry there too, and the style in which he proceeds to do this affords a good specimen of the extravagance which has caused Celtic antiquity to be looked upon with so much suspicion. The story of Taliesin begins thus :—

"In former times there was a man of noble descent in Penllyn. His name was Tegid Voel, and his paternal estate was in the middle of the Lake of Tegid, and his wife was called Ceridwen."

Nothing could well be simpler; but what Davies finds in this simple opening of Taliesin's story, is prodigious :—

"Let us take a brief view of the proprietor of this estate. Tegid Voel—*bald serenity*—presents itself at once to our fancy. The painter would find no embarrassment in sketching the portrait of this sedate, venerable personage, whose crown is partly stripped of its hoary honours. But of all the gods of antiquity, none could with propriety sit for this

picture excepting Saturn, the acknowledged representative of Noah, and the husband of Rhea, which was but another name for Ceres, the genius of the ark."

And Ceres, the genius of the ark, is of course found in Ceridwen, "the British Ceres, the arkite goddess who initiates us into the deepest mysteries of the arkite superstition."

Now the story of Taliesin, as it proceeds, exhibits Ceridwen as a sorceress; and a sorceress, like a goddess, belongs to the world of the supernatural; but, beyond this, the story itself does not suggest one particle of relationship between Ceridwen and Ceres. All the rest comes out of Davies's fancy, and is established by reasoning of the force of that about "bald serenity."

It is not difficult for the other side, the Celt-haters, to get a triumph over such adversaries as these. Perhaps I ought to ask pardon of Mr. Nash, whose *Taliesin* it is impossible to read without profit and instruction, for classing him among the Celt-haters; his determined scepticism about Welsh antiquity seems to me, however, to betray a preconceived hostility, a bias taken beforehand, as unmistakable as Mr. Davies's prepossessions. But Mr. Nash is often very happy in demolishing, for really the Celt-lovers seem often to try to lay themselves open, and to invite demolition. Full of his notions about an arkite idolatry and a Helio-dæmonic worship, Edward Davies gives this translation of an old Welsh poem, entitled *The Panegyric of Lludd the Great*:—

"A song of dark import was composed by the distinguished Ogdoad, who assembled on the day of the moon, and went in open procession. On the day of Mars they allotted wrath to their adversaries; on the day of Mercury they enjoyed their full pomp; on the day of Jove they were delivered from the detested usurpers; on the day of Venus, the day of the great influx, they swam in the blood of men; * on the day of the Sun there truly as-semble five ships and five hundred of those who make supplication: O Brithi, Brithoi! O son of the compacted wood, the shock overtakes me; we all attend on Adonai, on the area of Pwmpai."

That looks Helio-dæmonic enough, undoubtedly; especially when Davies prints *O Brithi, Brithoi!* in Hebrew characters, as being "vestiges of sacred hymns in the Phœnician language." But then comes Mr. Nash, and says that the poem is a middle-age composition, with nothing Helio-dæmonic about it; that it is meant to ridicule the monks; and that *O Brithi, Brithoi!* is a mere piece of unintelligible jargon in mockery of the chants used by the monks at prayers; and he gives this counter-translation of the poem:—

"They make harsh songs; they note eight numbers. On Monday they will be prying about. On Tuesday they separate, angry with their adversaries. On Wednesday they drink, enjoying themselves ostentatiously. On Thursday they are in the choir; their poverty is disagreeable. Friday is a day of abundance, the men are swimming in pleasures.*

* Here, where Saturday should come, something is wanting in the manuscript.

On Sunday, certainly, five legions and five hundreds of them, they pray, they make exclamations : O Brithi, Brithoi ! Like wood-cuckoos in noise they will be, every one of the idiots banging on the ground."

As one reads Mr. Nash's explanation and translation after Edward Davies's, one feels that a flood of the broad daylight of common-sense has been suddenly shed over the *Panegyric on Lludd the Great*, and one is very grateful to Mr. Nash.

Or, again, when another Celt-lover, Mr. Herbert, has bewildered us with his fancies, as uncritical as Edward Davies's; with his neo-Druidism, his Mithriac heresy, his Crist-celi, or man-god of the mysteries; and, above all, his ape of the sanctuary, "signifying the mercurial principle, that strange and unexplained disgrace of paganism," Mr. Nash comes to our assistance, and is most refreshingly rational. To confine ourselves to the ape of the sanctuary only. Mr. Herbert constructs his monster,—to whom he says "great sanctity, together with foul crime, deception, and treachery, is ascribed,—out of four lines of old Welsh poetry, of which he adopts the following translation :—

"Without the ape, without the stall of the cow, without the mundane rampart, the world will become desolate, not requiring the cuckoos to convene the appointed dance over the green."

One is not very clear what all this means, but it has, at any rate, a solemn air about it, which prepares one for the development of its first-named personage, the ape, into the mystical ape of the sanctuary. The cow, too,—says another famous Celt-lover, Dr. Owen, the learned author of the *Welsh Dictionary*,—the cow (*henfon*) is the cow of transmigration; and this also sounds natural enough. But Mr. Nash, who has a keen eye for the piecing which frequently happens in these old fragments, has observed that just here, where the ape of the sanctuary and the cow of transmigration make their appearance, there seems to come a cluster of adages, popular sayings; and he at once remembers an adage preserved with the word *henfon* in it, where, as he justly says, "the cow of transmigration cannot very well have place." This adage, rendered literally in English, is :—"Whoso owns the old cow, let him go at her tail;" and the meaning of it, as a popular saying, is clear and simple enough. With this clue, Mr. Nash examines the whole passage, suggests that *heb eppa*, "without the ape," with which Mr. Herbert begins, in truth belongs to something going before and is to be translated somewhat differently; and, in short, that what we really have here is simply these three adages one after another :—"The first share is the full one. Politeness is natural, says the ape. Without the cow-stall there would be no dung-heap." And one can hardly doubt that Mr. Nash is quite right.

Even friends of the Celt, who are perfectly incapable of extravagances of this sort, fall too often into a loose mode of criticism concerning him and the documents of his history, which is unsatisfactory in itself, and also gives an advantage to his many enemies. One of the best and most delightful friends he has ever had,—M. de la Villemarqué,—has seen clearly

enough that often the alleged antiquity of his documents cannot be proved, that it can be even disproved, and that he must rely on other supports than this to establish what he wants; yet one finds him saying: "I open the collection of Welsh bards from the sixth to the tenth century. Taliesin, one of the oldest of them," . . . and so on. But his adversaries deny that we have really any such thing as a "collection of Welsh bards from the sixth to the tenth century," or that a "Taliesin, one of the oldest of them," exists to be quoted in defence of any thesis. Sharon Turner, again, whose *Vindication of the Ancient British Poems* was prompted, it seems to me, by a critical instinct at bottom sound, is weak and uncritical in details like this: "The strange poem of Taliesin, called the *Spoils of Annwn*, implies the existence (in the sixth century, he means) of mythological tales about Arthur; and the frequent allusion of the old Welsh bards to the persons and incidents which we find in the *Mabinogion*, are further proofs that there must have been such stories in circulation amongst the Welsh." But the critic has to show, against his adversaries, that the *Spoils of Annwn* is a real poem of the sixth century, with a real sixth-century poet called Taliesin for its author, before he can use it to prove what Sharon Turner there wishes to prove; and, in like manner, the high antiquity of persons and incidents that are found in the manuscripts of the *Mabinogion*,—manuscripts written, like the famous *Red Book of Hergest*, in the library of Jesus College at Oxford, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries,—is not proved by allusions of the old Welsh bards, until (which is just the question at issue) the pieces containing these allusions are proved themselves to possess a very high antiquity. In the present state of the question as to the early Welsh literature, this sort of reasoning is inconclusive and bewildering, and more so carries us round in a circle. Again, it is worse than inconclusive reasoning, it shows so uncritical a spirit that it begets grave mistrust, when Mr. Williams ab Ithel, employed by the Master of the Rolls to edit the *Brut y Tywysogion*, the "Chronicle of the Princes," says in his introduction, in many respects so useful and interesting: "We may add, on the authority of a scrupulously faithful antiquary, and one that was deeply versed in the traditions of his order—the late Iolo Morganwg—that King Arthur in his institutes of the Round Table introduced the age of the world for events which occurred before Christ, and the year of Christ's nativity for all subsequent events." Now, putting out of question Iolo Morganwg's character as an antiquary, it is obvious that no one, not Grimm himself, can stand in that way as "authority" for King Arthur's having thus regulated chronology by his institutes of the Round Table, or even for there ever having been any such institutes at all. And finally, greatly as I respect and admire Mr. Eugene O'Curry, unquestionable as is the sagacity, the moderation, which he in general unites with his immense learning, I must say that he, too, like his brother Celt-lovers, sometimes lays himself dangerously open. For instance, the Royal Irish Academy possesses in its Museum a relic of the greatest value, the

Domhnach Airgid, a Latin manuscript of the four gospels. The outer box containing this manuscript is of the 14th century, but the manuscript itself, says O'Curry (and no man is better able to judge) is certainly of the 6th. That is all very well. "But," O'Curry then goes on, "I believe no reasonable doubt can exist that the *Domhnach Airgid* was actually sanctified by the hand of our great Apostle." One has a thrill of excitement at receiving this assurance from such a man as Eugene O'Curry; one believes that he is really going to make it clear that St. Patrick did actually sanctify the *Domhnach Airgid* with his own hands; and one reads on:—"As St. Patrick, says an ancient life of St. Mac Carthainn preserved by Colgan in his *Acta Sanctorum Hibernia*, was on his way from the north, and coming to the place now called Clogher, he was carried over a stream by his strong man, Bishop Mac Carthainn, who, while bearing the Saint, groaned aloud, exclaiming: 'Ugh! Ugh!'

"Upon my good word," said the Saint, 'it was not usual with you to make that noise.'

"I am now old and infirm," said Bishop Mac Carthainn, 'and all my early companions in mission-work you have settled down in their respective churches, while I am still on my travels.'

"Found a church then," said the Saint, 'that shall not be too near us (that is to his own Church of Armagh) for familiarity, nor too far from us for intercourse.'

"And the saint then left Bishop Mac Carthainn there, at Clogher, and bestowed the *Domhnach Airgid* upon him, which had been given to Patrick from heaven, when he was on the sea, coming to Erin."

The legend is full of poetry, full of humour; and one can quite appreciate, after reading it, the tact which gave St. Patrick such a prodigious success in organizing the primitive church in Ireland; the new bishop, "not too near us for familiarity, nor too far from us for intercourse," is a masterpiece. But how can Eugene O'Curry have imagined that it takes no more than a legend like that, to prove that the particular manuscript now in the Museum of the Royal Irish Academy was once in St. Patrick's pocket?

I insist upon extravagances like these, not in order to throw ridicule upon the Celt-lovers,—on the contrary, I feel a great deal of sympathy with them,—but, rather, to make it clear what an immense advantage the Celt-haters, the negative side, have in the controversy about Celtic antiquity; how much a clear-headed sceptic, like Mr. Nash, may utterly demolish, and, in demolishing, give himself the appearance of having won an entire victory. But an entire victory he has, as I will next proceed to show, by no means won.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

Notes on the Cattle Plague.

INTELLIGENT foreigners have observed of us as a nation that though we fail to carry out our precautionary and remedial measures with that admirable and timely precision which is so easy to a despotic government, we attempt a greater number of things, and that if we accomplish them less perfectly, we do, in a fashion, educate ourselves in the process. When our education is complete, we shall, of course, undertake more feats, and perform them better, than any other people. Meanwhile, it may not be amiss to consider how we have dealt with the Cattle Plague which now devastates our land; and though we have not any cure to propose which is the result of our actual experience, it may yet be that by a careful summary of all the views which have been unfolded, and all the propositions that have been ventilated, by pushing them to their logical conclusions, and making that which all sermon-writers know as the "third head, or practical application," something definite and useful may be evolved, if not for the animals, at least for ourselves. Of remedies so called there have been scores announced and sold; but of those absolutely efficacious, so far as is known, not one. Inoculation—the only thing which, short of death, was recommended by old Australian cattle-holders—has been very little tried here, probably because those who advised it admitted that "it caused the tail to swell enormously;" and as we all made up our minds, in the first instance, that every beast attacked must die, we were desirous not needlessly to disfigure him, lest inspectors might challenge the carcase, and people refuse to buy and eat of it. The few large owners of the high-bred short-horns (almost priceless in value) divided their herds into small lots, which were domiciled in different sheds far from the high roads. Each lot had its separate herdsman, whose duty it was to attend exclusively to his own animals, and on no account to approach the others, or to go beyond the boundaries of the farm, or to hold intercourse with other herdsmen, cattle-dealers, or drovers. Any stock sold, as sheep, pigs, &c., were invariably driven into the public road before changing hands; and no animals of any kind were bought or allowed to be domiciled in the farm, whether from infected districts or not. So far these expedients seem to have answered perfectly well. The small farmers and cowkeepers daubed the noses of their beasts with tar, and hung around their necks little bags of camphor or strings of onions, which it is to be supposed would act more as a species of charm than according to any rational theory. In a general way, these men attempted little more; and having done this, they awaited the result, some with confidence, some with fear. As might have been anticipated,

they were heavy sufferers. When the disease once commenced it quickly emptied the sheds and fields, and a week was often sufficient to turn a prosperous cowkeeper into a ruined man. When the cows were visibly affected some gave them salt, others chalybeate waters and quinine; some administered opium and castor-oil, others turpentine and gin; some sulphur and whisky, others mineral acids and creosote; some rubbed them and gave them ginger, others fomented them and gave them globules; some kept them warm, some kept them cold; but all was wildness, terror, and confusion, or blind confidence and final dismay. Nothing seems to have been done on any recognized principle of medical practice. Miss Burdett Coutts loved her flock not wisely, but too well; for so much whisky was administered that several died, not of the disease, but of *delirium tremens*. The teetotal papers have not yet thought fit to improve that occasion; and we make the Alliance company a present of the suggestion, and invite them to supply the omission. The action of the Executive seems to have been, in the first instance, confined to three measures. The Privy Council was summoned to deliberate, a Royal Commission was called into existence, and the Archbishop of Canterbury was ordered to compose a prayer. The results of the cogitations of the Lords in Council were communicated to the expectant world by Mr. Helps. These comprised a list of wearyful and onerous precautions to be observed towards the living, and of more innumerable and mournful duties to be performed in connection with the funeral obsequies, which no one has yet, so far as ordinary observation extends, attempted to carry out in their integrity. As for the animals actually affected, those in the first report my Lords doomed at once—for them there was no hope; all endeavours were to be directed to one final deed, *i.e.* to knock the creature on the head. Smite hip and thigh, slay and spare not, was the advice of the Government, and the practice of the inspectors and veterinary surgeons in the first panic of the plague. Another notable suggestion was that all persons attending diseased cattle should wear a safety dress. It is not needful to describe this dress as elaborately as Mr. Helps was compelled to do; it will be sufficient to say that the man so equipped would in all essential particulars, and certainly in appearance, resemble the diver at the Polytechnic. He was not to see or tend healthy beasts, nor to wander about the roads, nor to touch or associate with his own kind until he had got out of his safety dress, immersed it in disinfectant fluid, and treated his own head, eyes, ears, and such parts of his person as had been necessarily exposed in the same severe manner; and as the dress was to be worn over the usual clothes, the latter were likewise to be taken off and fumigated. It is always well to economize trouble, and the necessity for the last precaution might well have been obviated by the simple plan of the man getting in and out of his safety clothes in the dress with which nature has provided him. Some people thought that by smearing the skin well with oil, absorption and exhalation would be in a great degree checked, and infection thus prevented; but it is clearly better to take advantage of a great

natural law than to provide against its operation. Man is an absorbing and exhaling animal ; and by this perpetual soaking and saturation it was perhaps intended by the authorities that he should be transformed into a living and moving disinfectant, giving off fumes of chlorine gas in all directions ; in fact, a kind of highly-charged vessel, or " head-centre " of health.

The funeral rites were too numerous to detail. The animals were to be buried where they died, and in quick-lime, with all their belongings, except the horns and hoofs. This was misplaced leniency, for the horns, hoofs, and tail are things well known to be typical and suggestive of the embodiment of evil, and therefore ought, more than anything else, to have been buried away out of sight. The droppings of the unfortunate deceased were ordered to be carefully interred where they were dropped, along with the piece of turf which they had defiled, by means of an instrument which, as described, would be a kind of cross between a " spud " and a long gravy-spoon. When this had been thoroughly and exhaustively done in every field, such grass as was bold and ill-advised to grow thereon, was to be formally burned. The quickest plan would have been, no doubt, to have sown the accursed spot with salt, but in the hurry of business, this idea does not seem to have occurred to any one. These recommendations were eventually greatly modified, and indeed were never carried out with any kind of accuracy or unanimity. Otherwise it would have been a singular, and yet a suggestive spectacle, to see the landscape dotted over and over our fair fields perambulated by the sombre and careworn figures of the men who, clad in their safety dress, and spud or spoon in hand, would patiently pursue their odoriferous and endless task. There was a cry at one time, that horses, chickens, pigs, and sheep were liable to the disorder, but this gradually died out. It is, however, pretty certain that sheep imbibe and carry about the infection in their wool ; and it was proposed that all dogs should be tied up lest they should become mediums of contagion. This would have rendered necessary an enormous addition to the staff of shepherds and drovers, since, as is well known, a man and his dog can collect and drive more sheep than twenty men without a dog. A flock of sheep driven by a score of men disguised in the safety dress, would have been something to see, besides looking like being thoroughly in earnest. Sheep are notoriously stupid creatures, but a little child was not long since terrified to death by the sight of a surpliced clergyman, and to be pursued by such drovers might drive even sheep into insanity. Another idea ventilated, was to burn bonfires, let off crackers and fireworks, and make much smoke ; it was reported that by these means the cholera had greatly abated at Toulon, Marseilles, &c., acting chiefly, it was supposed, by diverting the minds of the survivors ; and assuming that the cholera and the rinderpest are alike judgments, what would remove one would remove the other. This was a bold adoption of psychological therapeutics, and as such might well be commended for its ingenuity. It has often been asserted that agriculturists, by the force of

association, not only acquire the bovine gaze, but contract the bovine cast of thought; therefore each man would be competent to invent diversions for his own beasts. If any should be at fault, or visibly incompetent to his task, the philanthropists who improvise recreation for the "pet-lambs" of the Home Office ought to be made to assist him. What has been found to amuse the minds of the goats, could hardly fail to afford salutary distraction to the sheep. Up to this point no cures had been effected, hardly any even attempted; there was indiscriminate slaughter on all sides, so that it was computed that more were killed by order of the inspectors, than really perished of actual plague, the deaths from lung-disease being often mistaken for the other. Owing to conflicting circumstances, the Archbishop had not yet composed his prayer, and many people called loudly for a day of fasting and humiliation to be appointed. One writer expressed himself in the papers as follows:—"Like the potato disease, no satisfactory reason, humanly speaking, has been assigned as to the cause of this terrible calamity. It must, I think, be referred to a higher power, and should be regarded as a severe visitation from God." There was about this view one merit, that while we were all free to look upon it as a Divine judgment, we were all equally free to determine as to the person or things who had caused it; and equally sure to ascribe it to those most obnoxious to ourselves. Thus one man imputed it to slavery, another to the consumption of ardent spirits, a third to sabbath-breaking, a fourth to free-trade, a fifth to our persecution of the Pope, a sixth to our flirtation with the same. Orangeism, Fenianism, John Bright, Maynooth, and Earl Russell—all have had their turn, while the more orthodox of the Bishops detected in it the just punishment of the nation which produced Colenso, and of the Privy Council which refused to excommunicate him. Another writer owned that to appoint a fast and day of humiliation might be in the abstract, and *per se*, highly desirable, only he was "afraid that it might be seized upon as a kind of holiday, and thus become to very many an occasion for sin." By this time not one, but many days of fasting and humiliation had come to be inevitable, at least for the poor; the holding of cattle-markets was in various parts prohibited by the authorities (though unfortunately this was not done unanimously), the slaughter was immense both of sound and unsound beasts; and, to be candid, a good deal more of the flesh of the latter has been eaten than people are at all aware of.* There was in many places quite a glut of beef in the market, but though the wholesale price was the same or lower than in 1864, the butchers with cynical shamelessness continued to raise their demands to starvation point.

At length the prayer of his Grace of Canterbury was published. Suggestions, advice, and commentaries respecting it had been already largely poured forth on the subject; some had predicted for it all sorts of one-sidedness and defects, others had questioned the lawfulness of it, but the

* One benevolent man did indeed transform himself into a *corpus vile*, and voluntarily consumed diseased meat, without any evil effects, it is stated.

final unkindness was dealt by those who undertook to describe the painful difficulties and protracted labours which attended its birth, the ruthless cruelties of the surgeons *accoucheurs*, the rough dandling of the nurses, and the sufferings of the august and reverent parent condemned to stand in the background, and behold in silent agony the mutilation of his offspring. Foreigners learned not without a certain compassion that *one* Archbishop is first ordered by the Queen to prepare a prayer on a given subject; this done, he is required to submit it for approval to the Lords of the Privy Council: these gentlemen, we are told, commonly make some alteration in it, sufficient at least to maintain their right to alter what they please. It has been said that a member of the Privy Council many years ago, anxious to reassure the minds of those who feared "such Puseyite nonsense as the independence of the Church," remarked that "no one who had ever been present at a meeting of Privy Council and seen the Archbishop stand waiting while the lay members of the Council were reading and altering his prayer, would ever again talk about *that*." The Prayer, after being duly operated on, is sent as it were bleeding from all its wounds to the Queen's printer, and is thence despatched to the parochial clergy, who are ordered to read it aloud in their respective churches, and read it is accordingly. Certainly it seems at first sight strange that, having appointed an Archbishop, and given him a subject for prayer, we yet cannot trust him to compose a fitting form without correction; and no doubt there are those who deem the ungodly creatures and lax theologians to be found in the Privy Council wholly unfit either to suggest or criticize in such matters. But as yet our people prefer to be in bondage to the State rather than to the Bishops, and we like, though indirectly, to have some say as to what we will pray for, and how we will do it.

The poor farmers caught it on all hands. In a paroxysm of terror and for any price they could get, they consigned to the butcher their beasts, fat and lean alike. On the first they had no profit, and on the last a considerable loss; they paid fees to magistrates' clerks and others for permits to travel, to the inspector who first inspected their cows and then condemned them, to the man who killed them, and to the fellow who buried them. One slaughterman was said to have realized 600*l.* in three months. The members of the Cattle Plague Commission sat with great industry on what people irreverently termed addled eggs, and no one was found to admire the result of their hatching. The public was disappointed to observe that as to the origin of the disease, as well as to the mode of dealing with it, these gentlemen were equally divided, and as regarded remedy or curative treatment, they did not, at all events in their first report, even discuss it. The labours of the commissioners are only now beginning to acquire their real value in popular estimation. Unquestionably, had their somewhat timid recommendations been at once carried out, a very different state of things might have been anticipated. On one point they were very strenuous, namely, on the signal injustice of the order which required not only that beasts dying and dead should be slaughtered and

interred, but that all which were attacked, or even supposed to be attacked, should be, without any kind of compensation to the farmer, at once knocked on the head by inspectors, who, newly appointed, and burning to distinguish themselves, had often very hazy views respecting the proper symptoms of genuine rinderpest. That, in the first instance, *doctrinaires* in political economy should on principle object to reimburse the farmer for such of his stock as perished of disease, was to be expected; their theory has proved itself to be an expensive and short-sighted one, but it was at any rate logical and consistent. But when men, suffering already to a large extent, were ordered to sacrifice their property solely for the public good, and were refused liberty to use their skill in the endeavour to save the remnant of their stock, it would be difficult to imagine a case in which compensation for the ceding of rights over property would have been more wisely and justly accorded. Government did indeed accept the principle as laid down by the commissioners, but were more than usually unhappy in their application of it. Like an Irishman of all-work who darts off to carry out the first sentence of an order without tarrying to hear the conclusion, the Lords of the Privy Council were active in precisely the opposite direction of the one intended, and hastened, not to order compensation, but to stay the slaughter, lest compensation should become inevitable. And thus was stamped out, not the Plague, but the chance of extinguishing it. It had been originally ordered that all infected animals dying or slain were to be interred then and there on the spot, and thus to our knowledge it happened that out of six cows belonging to one man, and which died on a Saturday night, five were buried on the Sunday morning in the midst of a crowded district, and surrounded by houses, yards, and courts, swarming with women and children. This piece of hasty legislation had to be annulled, along with one or two other impracticable orders. In several towns the milkmen, envious of the superior opportunities of the butcher, held meetings at which they agreed *nem. con.* to raise the price of milk, and simultaneously to diminish the size of their measures, and though the matter was not openly discussed, there is little doubt that many of them did, in their own minds, propose, second, and carry a resolution to have a more frequent recourse in future to that which is popularly known as the "cow with the iron tail." On the surface the cowkeepers had justice on their side, but it was of a kind more apparent than real, for this reason:—in nine cases out of ten the cowkeeper whose animals caught the disease lost, not one-third or one-half of his stock, but every head that he possessed. His trade was simply gone, and he had no milk, either good or bad, with which to supply his customers, and therefore could not be affected by the increased price of the commodity. Those who continued to supply milk were generally those whose stock had altogether escaped infection. It was they who reaped the profits, and though they had a perfect moral and legal right to do so, it would be a mistake for any one to suppose that by paying the extra price exacted, he was thereby reimbursing the "poor man who had lost their

cattle." It was simply a mode by which those who had been exceptionally fortunate realized in solid cash the benefit of their good luck.

Meanwhile, though the prayer was duly said, the plague was not stayed. "We've gotten t' cattle pleague an' it's naw use a praying to kep it fro' oor shores; it 'ud be moor likely if we were to pray to kep it oot of oor pariah," said one despairing rustic to another after service on Sunday. It was believed, and there is much reason and evidence to support the assertion, that the Government inspectors were themselves the most active in disseminating the disease, that they went from herd to herd and farm to farm, carrying about with them in their clothes and on their person the infection, that they adopted little or no kind of precaution, and that in some cases the horse they rode, being first tied up in one stable and then another, was a fertile source of infection whenever it approached sound cattle. "If I see one of these Government chaps on my farm I'll shoot him if I hang for it to-morrow," exclaimed one farmer in the extremity of his wrath and terror. It must be borne in mind that these gentlemen, besides their fixed salaries, received their travelling expenses, and were thereby stimulated into unnatural activity, and a large majority imagined that the more they slew, and the greater the quantity of ground they crossed, the greater their merit and vigilance. Perhaps if we had in the first instance besought God for what we should stand the most grievously in need of ultimately, we should have prayed Him to infuse,—

A spirit of courage into the Queen's Ministers, so that they should not continue to behave as if the penalty for failure would be the loss of their heads instead of the loss of their places;

A spirit of unanimity into the commissioners, so that they might neither confound the dull nor anger the wise by reason of the opposite nature of their suggestions;

A spirit of decency into the butchers, so that they might resist the temptation for turning a national calamity into an occasion for wholesale robbery;

A spirit of moderation into the inspectors, so that they might neither infect nor slay more than should be necessary to earn their salaries and extras;

And lastly to send,

A spirit of patience into all men who should be required to have dealings with the above-mentioned persons in whatever capacity.

Meanwhile the authorities on the Continent dealt with the scourge in a widely different manner, and with a success which will be hereafter alluded to.

Before the old year was out it began to be rumoured that the rinderpest was not the rinderpest at all, but malignant smallpox, for which it was reasonable to believe that vaccination was the true and specific remedy. Several eminent authorities were inclined to adopt this theory, and a number of sanguine spirits unhesitatingly proclaimed their con-

version. Mr. Tollemache magnanimously devoted a portion of his stock for the purpose of experiment, and there was a universal rush for vaccine matter, which commodity consequently rose to a premium. Those who sought it went from one institution to another, from the National Vaccine Society to the Small Pox Hospital, from pillar to post, from one doctor to the other, with small success. The very hospital authorities declined to furnish vaccine for cattle, forgetful of the fact that one cow properly vaccinated would afford vaccine matter for twenty other operations within three days. A number of unprincipled scoundrels immediately advertised as true vaccine an abominable compound of irritant drugs, which when introduced into the system did undoubtedly produce a quite useless eruption, sufficient only to add to the wretched animal's discomfort, and also to destroy faith in the so-called remedy. Meanwhile, for once, English people began to wish that they had been treated even as the Irish are; and that the enlightened despotism which then forbade the importation of cattle, and which, had it been more enlightened still, would have forbidden the importation of Fenians likewise, had been also exercised with regard to this country. In vain the leading clubs and societies, the Central Farmers, the Royal Agricultural, and the Smithfield Club, besought the Executive for measures, not only immediate and stringent, but which should be everywhere alike compulsory. Alas ! not even from the Vatican could the *non possumus* be uttered with a more plaintive obstinacy than from the English council-chamber. With a singular pusillanimity, Government persisted in declining its proper responsibility, and suffered the burden of authority to be taken up or cast off at will by those on whom it ought never to have been forced. The powers given to the courts of quarter sessions as regards transit, the stoppage of traffic, &c., were entirely optional, and no sort of unanimity in action resulted. In some places fairs and markets were prohibited, in others not. The incorporated market-towns were in all cases a law unto themselves; and Leeds market was continued long after all surrounding fairs were closed, and became naturally a head-centre of infection. In other cases, towns, villages, and even farms, being, as it were, border towns, or lying within two quarter-sessions districts, had the advantage of being subject to two sets of conflicting regulations; and a man might start with some beasts, furnished with a clean bill of health and every requisite permit, and within a couple of miles, or even a couple of hundred yards, find himself where he could neither drive them further nor drive them back, sell them, pasture them, nor slaughter them.* Cattle might be driven along the high-

* A very valuable bull, from the celebrated Warlaby herd, was some time ago despatched into Berwickshire; the Catterick station-master, however, refused to book it further than Newcastle, and when it arrived there, another set of regulations were in force, and a new certificate was requisite. The North-Eastern Company declined to convey it north, unless two farmers of substantial position, living within so many miles, could certify to its health. The farmers were found, but another hitch occurred. They must have known the creature intimately for the space of twenty-eight days, and the bull was, in every sense of the word, a recent acquaintance. It was equally

road to a railway station, but not to a butcher's shop, nor from one farm to another; offal and manure might be carted here, but not there; and an invisible line on the public road was the boundary on one side of which the owner might drive his sheep at pleasure, on the other he would be liable to a heavy fine. It was entirely optional with the railway companies to disinfect their cattle-trucks or otherwise; and the utter fatuity of such regulations as Government had ventured to put forth may be measured by this, that whereas a respectable farmer, giving his proper address, and furnished with a licence for his own district, might be summarily stopped so soon as he overstepped his boundary, there was up to the second week in February nothing which could possibly prevent a perfect stranger from driving his cattle all over the country. A rural policeman might indeed arrest him, but it would be at his peril; he might also ask him questions, equally the stranger might lawfully refuse to answer them. The justices were incessantly occupied in making new orders without repeating the old ones, until some conviction disclosed the fact that the two were in conflict. On an average, fresh instructions were issued once a week. The clerks to the magistrates and farmers were employed, how vainly they best know, in trying to understand or reconcile them. Drovers were brought up and fined in nominal sums, because it was evident that they had acted in an ignorance which their best efforts could not dispel. No two sets of magistrates issued the same orders, no two inspectors gave the same advice; no one could show the boundary lines; and, in general, the justices could never agree as to what their own orders meant, or how they were to be carried out. If Government had tried to bring about a state of things in which concealment of disease, evasion of the law, and every kind of subterfuge, should appear to the stock-holder as his only chance of self-preservation, nothing better calculated for that purpose could have been devised than the present system.

Before January was out it was clear the theory of small-pox was no longer tenable. Several of the vaccinated calves and heifers which Mr. Tollemache had caused to be exposed to infection had died of rinderpest; and Professor McCall, of Glasgow, reported to the *Lancet* that he had vaccinated successfully an animal which had passed through an attack of the plague. This, of course, indicates the absence either of identity or antagonism between cow-pox and rinderpest or plague. Hitherto it had been supposed that sheep, though they could convey infection in their fleece, were not liable themselves to take the disease. But in

useless to send for some of its old friends at Catterick, since they did not live within the limits laid down. The railway authorities besought of the attendant to vacate the horse-box, and take his bull with him; but this request was sturdily refused, and the evil disposition of *Taurus* was too plainly evident for any official to venture to evict him in person. So for ten days the animal lived in the horse-box triumphantly, along with the attendant who administered to its wants; at the end of which time the Company, urged probably by despair, agreed to convey it to its destination, where, in the first instance, the owner refused to receive it, on account of its long detention in a district notoriously plague-stricken.

February, 1865, Inspector Day reported that a large number of sheep on a farm in Yorkshire were dead or dying of the plague. In the first three weeks of February the deaths reported averaged 11,000 per week, representing a loss of something like 300,000*l.*; the country gentlemen grew furious, and farmers were in despair. Meanwhile the plague had been stamped out in France and Prussia by the adoption of stringent measures—closing of the ports, strict isolation, and slaughter of all beasts either infected or which had been exposed to infection, accompanied in all cases by full compensation to the owners. The same thing was done in Belgium; which certainly proves that a strictly constitutional Government can, if it is disposed, deal satisfactorily with this calamity. The total amount expended in compensation did not exceed 12,000*l.* for the three countries. There was a good deal of evasion and irregularity practised in the burying of diseased carcasses. The regulation was that they should be placed under at least five feet of earth; occasionally, therefore, it happened that they were put into a hole two feet in depth, and a little conical mound, not quite three feet high, was piled over them. These graves became, of course, centres of infection. The wretched animals suffered many things of divers physicians. A writer in the *Lancet* proposed that variolous matter from the Small-Pox Hospital should be used instead of vaccine lymph for vaccination. The necklaces of onions not having proved sufficiently powerful, a benevolent nobleman (Lord Leigh) recommended the internal administration of a bruised pulp composed of onions, garlic, shalot, assafoetida, and ginger; and it is probable that the amazing nastiness of the mess would of itself inspire the agricultural mind with faith in its healing virtue. The most unkind cut of all was dealt by Ministers, who, when charged in Parliament with having conspicuously failed in their duty with regard to the plague, boldly declared that more than they had done, no mortal man could have accomplished, on account of the wretchedly backward state of public opinion—a statement which, if true, proves either that we are a much more stupid people than we commonly suppose ourselves to be, or that her Majesty's advisers are remarkable for a degree of modesty, self-diffidence, and poverty of spirit, which some would esteem admirable in women, but seems slightly out of place among English legislators and statesmen. Up to this time the duties of fasting, prayer, and humiliation have been pretty evenly divided. The People have fasted, the Clergy have prayed, and the Ministers have humiliated themselves, and been humiliated by others. But at last—when this article is written—we have reason to hope for such energetic measures as are best calculated to overcome the disaster.

Jacques in the Forest.

"I'm thinking she'll no rise for an hour yet." The observation was made by a very strong-minded man—one keenly alive to the value of truth in the matter to which his words related. It was made to an idle man keenly interested in that very matter. It was not his own wife, or my wife, or any one's wife, or indeed anything female of which he spoke. The idle man had made the most strenuous exertions—had indeed put forth a sustained power of which he had no idea, and was at that moment sick even unto death; his heart beat so that every great throb banged through his brain—his body heaved, his eyes swam—hot scalding drops ran down his brow, sweltered over his eyes, sank into the thirsty folds of his garments. Exhausted, panting, he lay extended on the sward, biting in vacuous pain a piece of bulrush, and staring with wide eyeballs at some object straight before him. It was a hot day early in October—the sun wore just the slightest mantle of gauzy clouds, and was all the warmer by reason of the screen. Its diffused white light cast broadly through the sheen, flooded a vast landscape in which there was more water than land to be seen—blue-gray water set in every variety of form among the broad expanse of brown moor, which rolled away on the right to a hazy cloudland where sea and sky blended together, and on the left and everywhere else inland rose in wave-like folds higher and higher till it lapped the base of a shore of mountains seamed with ravines and whitened by water-courses. There was a grand silence afar. But close to the ear there was a gentle music made by a combination of breeze-borne gnats, buzzing daddylonglegs, and agitated heather-bells which swayed beneath the balmy wind. Now and then a hoarse croak overhead called attention to a black object which flew in graceless mazes through the sky, and down on the ridges below us the chuckling gabble of the cock-grouse provoked an uneasy grunt from the great gillie before me. There were two of us—one a long, thin-legged man, with red hair, grey eyes, red whiskers, blue cheeks, red hands, and purple brow. On his head was a grey cap pulled down over his flapping ears, a grey shooting coat of many pockets pulled up on his shoulders covered the great bands of muscle which held his bones in their iron grasp—a dusky-coloured knickerbocker distended wide apart by his brawny legs lapped across the stout worsted stockings which crept up from his brogues over a hillock of calf. Prone on his face he lay amid the surging heather, his spying glass neatly fixed on a tussock with the end ready to his eye, and one brawny hand placed backwards on the shoulder of his companion. Whether that person has sinew or ham he does not know. He does

know, however, that, if he had, they were not of much use to him, for he gasped and puffed like an overworked steam-engine. As to his attire, it was simply elegant, though it was not of a kind adapted for the streets of a fashionable city. Why should it be? He and his comrade were intent on murder, there, on the hill-side, as ready for a deed of blood as that Menschikoff of whom Mr. Kinglake writes in his beautiful poem called the Crimean War. A double-barrelled rifle lay stripped of its cover beneath the carcase of the puffing carl on the left, with its tubes pointed in a line with the telescope of the gaunt red man—but ever and anon as the former essayed to raise his head from the gnat-haunted heather, the gaunt, red man pressed it down again, and in a husky whisper, cautious and guilt-like, said, “Hisht—not yet! not yet!”

We were both together under circumstances of a painful nature. The night before I had gone to sleep—I am the man with the gun—with the full and fell intent of committing the crime, to the scene of which I have brought you. My dreams were light and so was my sleep, and before I had well forgotten, as it seemed to me, the sentences of the novel which swam before my eyes ere I blew out my candle, a red-bearded man by my bedside flashed a light across my face and woke me up to consciousness. “It’s time, major, for ye to be stirrin’, the captain’s at breakfast.” There were the zinc renovator filled with water, shining like a moon under the rays of the candle, on the dark carpet; the greased brogues beside the chair on which were deposited the strata of garments to be worn on that day, the jug of shaving water, and a narrow, pillar-like bar of light, marking the division of the shutters, and justifying the admonitions of the grisly Angus. “Hang that last bumper of claret.” Or could it be the solitary libation of toddy? Or might it be the pipe which wound up a course of cigars? Any way there was a slight feverdom in the blood and on the tongue. But whish! splash! slush! and slatter! sponge and spring water! stamp, and puff and rub! and in all the glories of the nude Apollo rubescens the vapours of the evening fly away, and the rasp of the razor over the unwonted stubble left by the overthrow of Crimean and Indian crops of beard by Horse Guard regulations offers the last sacrifice to the graces and to comfort. The shutters are thrown open, up goes the window; a crowd of red-wings in the holly-tree are holding council as to their proceedings for the day; already a flock of wood-guests are pouting through the cornfield outside the garden; and the rooks in the grove are taking easy flights, to ascertain if the morning be well-aired enough for their breakfast-gaining forays. A riotous rabbit is frikking on the small lawn, which descends in a slope to the brawling stream, fringed with boulders and dwarf shrubs—terror of far-casting anglers. In the whirling pools one can see the rise of the brown trout and the bold runs of the impetuous salmon as he rushes onwards and upwards from the loch below. At the porch, already equipped with ponderous deer-saddle, stands the shaggy Highland pony. Beside him is the keen-eyed gillie, Rory Grant, with his brace of mongrel-looking greyhounds in the

leash, quivering and whimpering in the cold. All else is shrouded in a white, sheet-like cloud. But there are mountains all around; for our dear little lodge—(O Farquhar of Moneypenny, how *can* you ask such infernal rents—and get them?)—our dear little lodge is situated in the midst of Strathbagpipe, by the side of Haultfishfag, with Torriebaccagh on one side and Draincanagen on the other, so that the mist likes the locality, and lies there on a fair resting-ground till late in the day at times. It is not far from our bed-room to the dining-room—a circumstance more valuable and appreciated at night than in the early morning; and so ere half an hour has elapsed the person who has been spoken of is seated at the board, which is still illuminated by candles, and is surveying, in comprehensive view, a dish of kipper salmon, each section wrapped in snowy paper, just enbrowned at the edges, and speckled with fish fat—a dish of Loch Fynes; a dish of hashed grouse; a smoking glory of red-deer venison collops; an expanse of poached eggs spread over the red ham, as snow-wreaths lie on the moor hillocks; jam and marmalade in enamelled columns; ewers of milk and cream; mounds of various cake, sauces, and bread; a loch of porridge, and a mountain of toast; a hissing urn, and a glowing fount of tea. The captain has gone off—a lank, sleepless, lean, conspirator of a man, to the manner born—early afoot ever, and late to bed, always to be marked in his ways by a grey fume of tobacco-smoke—a very Stromboli of smokers; kilt-wearing, light-bonneted, scar-legged. “Off-an’-away a gude half hour with McAlister to Glenfunaben,” my gillie tells me. “I’m ready now.” “Skreek! fis-s-s.” That is my vesuvian, as I strike my light at the hall-door, and take my first mouthful of the heavenly azure, slightly flavoured with Havannah. The “pony Jane” sighs as she views the bulk of the grand man who approaches; the dogs whimper, the gillie gives me the compliments of the early morning. Then out comes the man with sandwiches, the “men’s dinners,” as they are called; a bottle of cold tea, a flask of something more exciting and less wholesome.—The capacious game-bag swallows them all up. The pony Jane gives a tremendous hump and grunt of disgust as the person alluded to gets “a leg-up,” and is deposited in the saddle. The red man shoulders the macintosh-guarded rifle, lights his pipe, and steps on ahead with that easy, light-toed, heelless step which has taken these mountain men up many a smoke-wreathed hill slope, and can never be stopped but by the leaden or iron messenger which carries his special billet. The gillie and the dogs follow, and down the gravelled avenue we troop on our errand.

The sun has just climbed—I would write *clombe* an I dared—up the side of a grey barrier which has fenced in the darkness all night long, and he is now sending out his scouts to search for the mountain-tops—right through the columns of cloud which have lain over the valleys and straths, the glens and the corries. ’Tis a lovely sight to see these ever-growing islands rise in sharp outlines, from the obscure, and spread into orange-tinged undulations across the cold sea of the morning!

But we press on—our poetical sentiments evaporate in hard marching on the hard high-road and in the tramp of the pony's hoofs as he presses on after the stalwart stalkers with his fardel of flesh, pipe-smoking, and shivering on his cold saddle. No word is spoken. It is too cold for talking even for those who walk, and the equestrian is lost in considering how it is that the toes can administer such exceeding pain to all the body corporate under the influences of deficient circulation. At every turn in the white road which winds on and up and down and sideways over hillside by tarn, past burn, and over stream, the edges of the mountains which surround us vary in shape and hue, the light grows so strong at last that Angus's crisp red curls light up his bonnet-flaps like the flame of a candle flicking from under an extinguisher. There he plods on, broad-backed, round-shouldered, narrow-waisted, lean-hipped, light-legged, clad in Saxon-cut shooting-coat and vest, and knickerbocker, in Highland hose and shoon, bearing the waterproof-cased rifle on his shoulders, whilst the gillie with the dogs straining on the leash, keeps step beside him and exchanges horrid converse in floods of low guttural Gaelic, intermittent with puffs of smoke from ancient cutty pipes. And as we tramp along there comes from a ravine near at hand a sound hoarser than the never-ending cry of the waters which rush in unseen depths towards the sea, and a raven scenting death within the iron tubes calls to his wife below, and claps the deep leaden hill-side with his heavy wing till his mate joins him, when they rise higher and higher, and take their way to the corrie in front of us. It is a six-mile tramp along the hard-high road. The sun as it climbs from ridge to ridge loses its strength in the lap of the cold clouds. It lightens up range upon range of rugged rock till from the high level of the road we look on either side and behold a tumultuous sea of granite and slate fixed for ever in angry crest and overhanging ridges above the valley of purple heather and green marsh. A bitter wind sweeps over them, but spends its rage in vain on all save my miserable legs and on Brahan and Oscar, who cringe behind the gillie's legs. The fizz of another vesuvian was only an incident in this journey of an hour and a half. At last the road turning abruptly over the ravine, mounted more steeply and pierced the moor, which lapping it with a fringe of heather receded in brown folds higher and higher till it reached the base of the first rocky shore whence the deer forest swept round to meet the rays of the morning sun.

Angus halted—took his telescope from the cover, and looking round for a stone to prop his back against, lay down with his legs stretched out, and his elbow resting on one knee to support the glass, with which he proceeded to make a deliberate survey of the hill-side. What a blessing that was—with what a rapturous sough I threw myself down on the heather; for the steady, long stride of these hill-men is trying to unaccustomed legs. Each tussock seems to rise against the feet, and every heather-covered hump throws out its arms to impede the labouring ankle; the hill-side, which from the distance seemed an easy slope, grows into a

steep lung-testing ascent, the water-courses swell into streams, the very stones live and move under his uncertain steps. "Whew! how hot it is!" "Ye'd better not make a nise in the forest," quoth the red man. Ugh! ugh! ugh! rings out a sharp sultry cough. The red man looks round with an air of pity and despair which says plainly, "If you do that again, we may as well turn back." Joy then at the halt and the repose. For a time I hear nothing but the bumping of my own heart. Then I become aware of the fact that I am very high up; and the lodge is glistening like a snow-drop in the trees far below. Next I perceive that Angus has removed his eye from the telescope, and is looking at me without saying a word. "Did you see anything?" A nod. "What is it?" "It's a good peest enough. It's a goot stag, and three heends. But thee're a long way. And it's a difficult staak, I'm thinkin'." "Let me see them." "Do you see ta pig white staan by ta green spot, just unter ta cairn over ta burn? There it is—a leetle more to ta left?" "I see it." "Well, ta stag is lying down under ta staan, and the heends is standing up below him feeding." I look, I stare, I squint: use right eye, left eye, both eyes. O, Lynceus, aid me! "I can't see anything, Angus." "Hah, sir, yer not lookin' in ta rect dareckshun at all; it's a hundret yarts to ta left of ta cairn." Steady, sedulous sweeping of the whole area. At last "I see three reddish specks below the white rock." "That's ta heends." "And I see now a big dark speck close to the corrie." "Tat's ta stag." "How do you know?" "I see his horns; it's a goot peest." I should have liked very much to have then and there denounced Angus as a sayer of the thing that was not, but controlled the impulse. Then came another pause. "It's a vara difficult corrie to get till with the weend in this airt," quoth Angus. And then to my indignation he stood up, "What the dence are you at? Why, they'll be off!" "Heck, major, they're two mile away, and the peests have not got spying-glasses." Angus picked a piece of the fluffy wool of his coat, held it between his fingers, let it go and watched it as it floated away to leeward. "We must just chance it, major. The wind is vara bad for us; it's a long, long stank." There was a click, click, click as Angus put up his telescope, put it into the case, looked all round, and then to my intense surprise, without a word, turned down the hill and proceeded with long bounding steps to take the direction from which we had come. A rest at full length, despite the gnats, on a natural bed of heather gives a false feeling of strength to the inexperienced southerner. There is also great ease at first in a descent, and so I, the major, striding grandly from tuft to tuft, splashing into soft places, lighting agilely on boulders, for some time imagined that going down hill was a pleasant unfatiguing operation, in which the master was as good as his man. But no one ever saw such a hill. The more one went down it the more it lengthened on and on, and when the ridge which seemed to bound the descent by a wide plain of moor was reached, lo! it was but a vantage ground for a fresh humilier. The heather became contrary and pugnacious, the boulders grew unsteady and uncertain; an unaccount-

able tendency to slipping and stumbling forwards and backwards, and sideways, began to manifest itself, and at last there was a quivering of the knee, and a sort of shock to the brain which made the eyes dance at every step. It was with a sensation of much relief I beheld Angus halt once more, heard the click of the telescope, threw myself down on the turf whilst he reconnoitred, and watched him surveying the ground, and now and then picking a piece of fluff from his jacket, and letting it float down the wind. They were there yet, he said, the stag now standing up, and one of the hinds was near him; the others were invisible, and although we had come a long way from our original halting-place, our course had been oblique, so that we were now more directly beneath them. "We must just staak them up ta burn," quoth Angus. On our right a brook which came down the hill now in swift runs amid conglomerate rocks and slabs of slate, now in falls which made music in the morning air, then in deep trench-like streaks marked by bright green verdure, formed a series of pools, which were joined one to another by tiny cascades. Angus turned aside, and putting up his glass, made for the border of the burn, up which he ascended, indifferent to the choice of stone, moss, or water for his steps. I followed; it was well enough, or bad enough as long as we walked. But on reaching a wall-like barrier of slate, over which the burn leaped in a brisk foaming fall, Angus took a long look with the glass. "We must creep now; keep close, and get as near to me as you can, sir." In half an hour more, I had reason to understand the full terror of the curse on the serpent—"On thy belly shalt thou go," a dreadful judgment truly!—my knees were filled with the sharp ends of burnt heather, my arms up to the elbows were buried in black peat, now and then the burn had literally made a bed of me and run over my back, and all this time Angus, with one strong hand kept me close up to him, whilst the whole of my experience of the world was limited to a remarkably close view of the curious workmanship exhibited by the seat of his breeks. Many a rent made by some envious Casca of a thorn or rock, had been the subject of cunning reparation and clever handiwork, but after a while the contemplation of such excellence became monotonous. There was no help for it, however. At every movement to get away Angus was alert. "Keep down, sir, keep down! She'll see ye. Keep as close as ye can by me." Why did I ever come out to shoot deer? Why was I made the sport of this lungless, iron-sinewed Celt? "I must stop. I'm quite blown." "Ah, well! an ye must, ye must. But I'm thinking they'll not be long staying in that corrie. And it's a grand peest indeed, all out." So on again. What odd things came into my head, as I was pursuing the seat of Angus's trousers! I thought of Gisi the first time I saw her in *Norma*. I thought of crouching in a salt marsh off Yenikale, from a pack of rascally Cossacks; an ascent of a flight of steps from one of the London Dock wine-caves also came into my head, so did a clamber up the Jardin de Glace. A grand scene in *Timour the Tartar*,—the water-pipes bursting in my chambers after a thaw, a boysau in

the Crimean trenches, and a semi-maniacal jumble of all things incongruous, held in solution by a violent perspiration; a bumping pulse, and legs which felt anguished to marrowy softness, completed my sensations. What joy when Angus drew a long siffing breath, and with one great wriggle, lay flat and still, with his head raised just an inch above the heather, amid a gathering of small stones by the side of the burn. "They're all there," he whispered just before. "They're all lying town. The stag's about 120 yards off, but there's a peest of a hind between us." And then, keeping his hand on my head, he drew me softly up beside him, and pointed with his eyes and chin through the heather. I looked, but the scalding tears of perspiration ran into my eyes, and all I saw was a couple of watery moons dancing in the sky. "The stag has his horns just above the red staan, and you can see the tips of the heend's ears moving backwards and forwards above that green tuft in front of my finger. The other heends are down beyond the stag!" At last the mist cleared away from my sight, and I beheld two withered branches, russet-red and grey, close by the stone. As I looked they moved, and my heart, which had been bumping before, came to attention with a bang, and then fired a volley of musketry. "What a head! Give me the rifle!" "And it's a fine head indeed; but ye mustn't touch the rifle yet—she'll be risin' py-and-py."

And thus it is that I arrive at the opening words of this slight sketch. For after a long sufferance in which I endured all the agonies of midge and gnat—worse, as Mr. Gould will tell you, than the mosquito of the East—and the still greater torture of being obliged to remain perfectly still under them, Angus arrived at the dread conclusion that I must endure still more till it pleased the creature to rise. Now, the provoking thing was this, that whereas if I were a free agent I would have gone away that instant and fled from the gauzy cloud of persecutors which enveloped me; the stag, quite as much vexed by them, and being quite a voluntary agent, lay there, though he could have gone away in a moment if he had so listed. Perhaps he was a philosopher, and reasoned on the impolicy of waste of power in going to some other place where he would be just as badly off. So we waited together—I watched the flicking of his long ears, and the taperings of his horns till the heather seemed to grow into the landscape, and horns, ears, and heather all blended into a brown hazy agitation. I cannot tell how long this lasted—but my thoughts were wandering far away, and as my eye wandered too, more slowly from one vast hill-side to the other, and idly scanned the wavelike ridges, I thought of the time when the silent glades and valleys were peopled by thousands of stalwart kernes, and when the lowing of cattle leaped from hillock to hillock. They are all gone now. Nothing remains of them in their own land but the stone-heaps which mark the ruins of their uncouth dwellings. And it is well for them. In far lands they became freemen, and ate their bread in peace. Their children are the stirring, sterling, thriving denizens of prosperous cities and the lords of great domains.

held in fee simple from nature. From Strathbinkie and Glenbunkie in the days now not much more than a century old, two thousand three hundred men, with claymore and target, and a few miserable firelocks, followed the drunken, cursing, dicing, red-nosed, swaggering Lord Haddie, of Haddie, to be cut down and shot down, and deserted and transported. Over all that expanse a search-warrant backed by a microscope could only to-day have found Angus, the captain, myself, the gillie with the pony, the folks at the lodge, and some four or five families of stalkers, keepers, and the like. Haddie's race has long since died out, and his title serves to grace the roll of names which follow the southern honours of a Saxon duke. But the MacHaddies of Glen and Strath have spread over Canada, New Zealand, Australia—the isles of the sea, and the broad lands of the Far West. They will not have our convicts, and they will not have the aborigines; and lost in democratic whirls of independent self-satisfying existence, they have no respect for titles. No doubt, they are better and happier far than they would have been had their ancestors never dared the sea. Let us hope so, at all events.

But what is to be the end of the Highlands of Scotland? I don't mean to inquire if Cape Wrath be likely to migrate or not. Nor is there any reason to believe in a great geographical change, or in a Murchisonian geological convulsion. But I am much mistaken if there is not some daily catadysm going on in those pleasant places which lie between the Minch and the German Ocean from west to east, and from Perthshire and Argyleshire to Caithness and Sutherland from south to north. It is all a game of mammon against mankind, of sport and sheep, of salmon, grouse, and venison, against the aborigines. Once on a time a great Scotchman, Sir William Dunbar, with that fervid energy in bull-making which distinguishes all Celts condemned, instead of Gaelic or Erse, to use the obscure and inelegant Latin-Norman-Saxon called English, in proposing the health of the chairman of the Hudson's Bay Company, expressed a fervent wish that the said chairman "might long live to be what he ever had been"—(what was it? what could it be?)—"the *father* of the *aborigines* of Hudson's Bay." The poor Highlanders aboriginal want a father very badly, and may, for all I see, continue to want one; but it is evident they are losing the game at home. A short time ago a gallant gentleman, interested in a Highland regiment, expressed his surprise and regret to an old man of the mountains respecting the paucity of recruits for his corps in places once famous for fecundity. "Ah, well! Strathcrombie," quoth the ancient, "ye see it's just the change in the nature of the beast. If ye go up Glengarry and Glengarich, and round by Strathcairn, ye'll find recruits as many as ever, but they have all got horns on their heads." There is no use, we are told, in a maudlin sentimentalism on these matters. Races as brave as the old Celtic populations of the Highlands have died out thus. Emigration is the recognized remedy of the miserable Sangrados of the new school of political medicine-men, who can't deal with a full pulse and charged circulation

except by recourse to depletion. Not a doubt about it, but Sawney Bean's great-grandson who is running for a senatorship in Iowa, or Glenruin's grandson who is a member of council in Queensland, is much better off than if he were living in settled humanities in the finest scenery in the world, or were leading dhuinewassels to the sack of Tullochgorum. So far of the man himself. But as to the nation from which he came, what? Admit that it was not good for Sawney Bean to be forced to eat human mutton or beef, whatever the pachydermatous meat may have been—concede that it was wrong in Glenruin to have a feud with Strathcrombie—we still must feel that Sawney Bean and Glenruin would have been more effective and forcible fighters against the great Gaul or Samuel of the U.S. than the largest flock of sheep and the best head now to be found south of John of Groat's. And so—here I felt my elbow nudged, and turning my head towards Angus saw that his eyes were fixed right before him and turned slightly upwards, whilst the rifle was slid gently through the heather to my right hand. I looked forward and there—standing upright, with horns slightly thrown back, ears erect, dilated nostril sniffing upwards, fore legs set stiffly together and huge body thrown on the massive haunches ready for a bound, whilst the hinds stamped and grunted in the heather—stood the object of all my toils. "Aim low!" whispered Angus, as I unstopped the hammer. How the bead on the rifle barrel rose and fell, now bounding as it seemed into the air, now sinking below the whitish line beneath the stag's shoulders! And how long the second seemed ere the thin smoke clinging to the heather was swept back on my face! My eyes were blinded with the heavy drops which rolled off my brow, and as I started to my feet I caught as through a driving rain the forms of the deer bounding, leaping, flying ever up the hill. A deep despair chilled the throbbings of my heart. "I've missed after all!" "Missed!" quoth Angus, who was running toward the little hillock on which the stag had been standing. "An' if ye call that missing, I'd leek to see ye hitting. I heard the bullet strike him, an' he's not far off." In another minute I stood over the dying stag, Angus stripping off his coat and baring his brawny arm, laid his knife in the grass, and standing across "ta peest," handed me a gurgle of Glenlivat. "An' inteet 'twas a goot shot. An' it's a fine peest, petter than I thoet. It 'ill be nearer eighteen than seffteen stone. An' a royal heed too."

Hurrah for deer-stalking! Hurrah for the forest!

And yet I felt like a cowardly sneaking murderer as I lumbered down the hill-side, whilst by my heels puffed the pony carrying the dead deer which kept nodding his head at every step, and staring at me with his dull, wide open eye. "An' inteet 'twas a goot shot," said Angus, again. "An' I always feel as pleased as if I had five pound when a teet is killed so weel as that." It was all the man had a care or thought for. I would have given much more not to have killed it at all.

Armada.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

CHAPTER XV.

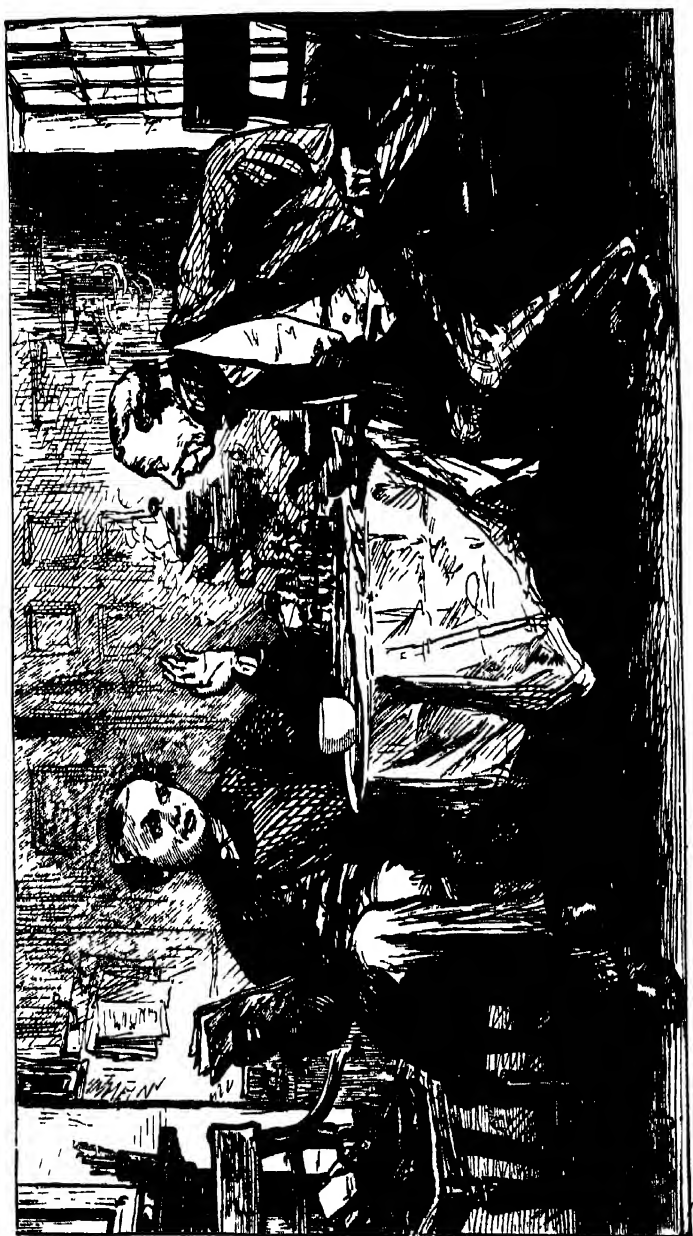
THE WEDDING DAY



HE time was nine o'clock in the morning. The place was a private room in one of the old-fashioned inns, which still remain on the Borough side of the Thames. The date was Monday, the 14th of August. And the person was Mr. Bashwood, who had travelled to London on a summons from his son, and had taken up his abode at the inn, on the previous day.

He had never yet looked so pitifully old and helpless as he looked now. The fever and chill of alternating hope and despair, had dried and withered and wasted him. The angles of his figure had sharpened. The outline of his face had shrunk. His dress pointed the melancholy change in him, with a merciless

and shocking emphasis. Never, even in his youth, had he worn such clothes as he wore now. With the desperate resolution to leave no chance untried of producing an impression on Miss Gwilt, he had cast aside his dreary black garments; he had even mustered the courage to wear his blue satin cravat. His coat was a riding coat of light grey. He had ordered it, with a vindictive subtlety of purpose, to be made on the pattern of a coat that he had seen Allan wear. His waistcoat was white; his trousers were of the gayest summer pattern, in the largest check. His wig was oiled and scented, and brushed round, on either side, to hide the wrinkles on his temples. He was an object to laugh at—he was an object to weep over. His enemies, if a creature so wretched could have had enemies, would have



FATHER AND SON

forgiven him, on seeing him in his new dress. His friends—had any of his friends been left—would have been less distressed if they had looked at him in his coffin, than if they had looked at him as he was now. Incessantly restless, he paced the room from end to end. Now he looked at his watch; now he looked out of windows; now he looked at the well-furnished breakfast-table—always with the same wistful uneasy inquiry in his eyes. The waiter coming in, with the urn of boiling water, was addressed for the fiftieth time in the one form of words which the miserable creature seemed to be capable of uttering that morning,—“My son is coming to breakfast. My son is very particular. I want everything of the best—hot things, and cold things—and tea and coffee—and all the rest of it, waiter; all the rest of it.” For the fiftieth time, he now reiterated those anxious words. For the fiftieth time, the impenetrable waiter had just returned his one pacifying answer,—“All right, sir; you may leave it to me”—when the sound of leisurely footsteps was heard on the stairs; the door opened; and the long-expected son sauntered indolently into the room, with a neat little black-leather bag in his hand.

“Well done, old gentleman!” said Bashwood the younger, surveying his father’s dress with a smile of sardonic encouragement. “You’re ready to be married to Miss Gwilt at a moment’s notice!”

The father took the son’s hand, and tried to echo the son’s laugh.

“You have such good spirits, Jemmy,” he said, using the name in its familiar form, as he had been accustomed to use it, in happier days. “You always had good spirits, my dear, from a child. Come and sit down; I’ve ordered you a nice breakfast. Everything of the best! everything of the best! What a relief it is to see you! Oh, dear, dear, what a relief it is to see you.” He stopped and sat down at the table—his face flushed with the effort to control the impatience that was devouring him. “Tell me about her!” he burst out, giving up the effort with a sudden self-abandonment. “I shall die, Jemmy, if I wait for it any longer. Tell me! tell me! tell me!”

“One thing at a time,” said Bashwood the younger, perfectly unmoved by his father’s impatience. “We’ll try the breakfast first, and come to the lady afterwards? Gently does it, old gentleman—gently does it!”

He put his leather bag on a chair, and sat down opposite to his father, composed, and smiling, and humming a little tune.

No ordinary observation, applying the ordinary rules of analysis, would have detected the character of Bashwood the younger in his face. His youthful look, aided by his light hair, and his plump bearded cheeks; his easy manner, and his ever ready smile; his eyes which met unshrinkingly the eyes of every one whom he addressed, all combined to make the impression of him a favorable impression in the general mind. No eye for reading character, but such an eye as belongs to one person, perhaps, in ten thousand, could have penetrated the smooth, deceptive surface of this man, and have seen him for what he really was.

creature whom the viler need of Society has fashioned for its own use. There he sat—the Confidential Spy of modern times, whose business is steadily enlarging, whose Private Inquiry Offices are steadily on the increase. There he sat—the necessary Detective attendant on the progress of our national civilization; a man who was in this instance at least, the legitimate and intelligible product of the vocation that employed him; a man professionally ready on the merest suspicion (if the merest suspicion paid him) to get under our beds, and to look through gimlet-holes in our doors; a man who would have been useless to his employers if he could have felt a touch of human sympathy in his father's presence; and who would have deservedly forfeited his situation, if, under any circumstances whatever, he had been personally accessible to a sense of pity or a sense of shame.

"Gently does it, old gentleman," he repeated, lifting the covers from the dishes, and looking under them one after the other all round the table. "Gently does it!"

"Don't be angry with me, Jemmy," pleaded his father. "Try, if you can, to think how anxious I must be. I got your letter as long ago as yesterday morning. I have had to travel all the way from Thorpe-Ambrose,—I have had to get through the dreadful long evening, and the dreadful long night—with your letter telling me that you had found out who she is, and telling me nothing more. Suspense is very hard to bear, Jemmy, when you come to my age. What was it prevented you, my dear, from coming to me when I got here yesterday evening?"

"A little dinner at Richmond," said Bashwood the younger. "Give me some tea."

Mr. Bashwood tried to comply with the request; but the hand with which he lifted the teapot trembled so unmanageably that the tea missed the cup and streamed out on the cloth. "I'm very sorry; I can't help trembling when I'm anxious," said the old man, as his son took the teapot out of his hand. "I'm afraid you bear me malice, Jemmy, for what happened when I was last in town. I own I was obstinate and unreasonable about going back to Thorpe-Ambrose. I'm more sensible now. You were quite right in taking it all on yourself, as soon as I showed you the veiled lady, when we saw her come out of the hotel; and you were quite right to send me back the same day to my business in the steward's office at the Great House." He watched the effect of these concessions on his son, and ventured doubtfully on another entreaty. "If you won't tell me anything else just yet," he said, faintly, "will you tell me how you found her out? Do, Jemmy,—do!"

Bashwood the younger looked up from his plate. "I'll tell you that," he said. "The reckoning up of Miss Gwilt has cost more money and taken more time than I expected; and the sooner we come to a settlement about it, the sooner we shall get to what you want to know."

Without a word of expostulation, the father laid his dingy old pocket-book and his purse on the table before the son. Bashwood the younger

looked into the purse; observed, with a contemptuous elevation of the eyebrows, that it held no more than a sovereign and some silver; and returned it intact. The pocket-book, on being opened next, proved to contain four five-pound notes. Bashwood the younger transferred three of the notes to his own keeping; and handed the pocket-book back to his father, with a bow expressive of mock gratitude, and sarcastic respect.

"A thousand thanks," he said. "Some of it is for the people at our office, and the balance is for myself. One of the few stupid things, my dear sir, that I have done in the course of my life, was to write you word when you first consulted me, that you might have my services gratis. As you see, I hasten to repair the error. An hour or two at odd times, I was ready enough to give you. But this business has taken days, and has got in the way of other jobs. I told you I couldn't be out of pocket by you—I put it in my letter, as plain as words could say it."

"Yes, yes, Jemmy. I don't complain, my dear, I don't complain. Never mind the money—tell me how you found her out."

"Besides," pursued Bashwood the younger, proceeding impenetrably with his justification of himself, "I have given you the benefit of my experience—I've done it cheap. It would have cost double the money, if another man had taken this in hand. Another man would have kept a watch on Mr. Armadale as well as Miss Gwilt. I have saved you that expense. You are certain that Mr. Armadale is bent on marrying her. Very good. In that case, while we have our eye on *her*, we have, for all useful purposes, got our eye on *him*. Know where the lady is, and you know that the gentleman can't be far off."

"Quite true, Jemmy. But how was it Miss Gwilt came to give you so much trouble?"

"She's a devilish clever woman," said Bashwood the younger; "that's how it was. She gave us the slip at a milliner's shop. We made it all right with the milliner, and speculated on the chance of her coming back to try on a gown she had ordered. The cleverest women lose the use of their wits in nine cases out of ten, where there's a new dress in the case—and even Miss Gwilt was rash enough to go back. That was all we wanted. One of the women from our office helped to try on her new gown, and put her in the right position to be seen by one of our men behind the door. He instantly suspected who she was, on the strength of what he had been told of her—for she's a famous woman in her way. Of course, we didn't trust to that. We traced her to her new address; and we got a man from Scotland Yard, who was certain to know her, if our own man's idea was the right one. The man from Scotland Yard turned milliner's lad for the occasion, and took her gown home. He saw her in the passage, and identified her in an instant. You're in luck, I can tell you. Miss Gwilt's a public character. If we had had a less notorious woman to deal with, she might have cost us weeks of inquiry, and you might have had to pay hundreds of pounds. A day did it in Miss Gwilt's case; and another day put the whole story of her life, in black and white,

into my hands. There it is at the present moment, old gentleman, in my black bag."

Bashwood the father made straight for the bag with eager eyes, and outstretched hand. Bashwood the son took a little key out of his waistcoat pocket—winked—shook his head—and put the key back again.

"I hav'n't done breakfast yet," he said. "Gently does it, my dear sir—gently does it."

"I can't wait!" cried the old man, struggling vainly to preserve his self-control. "It's past nine! It's a fortnight to-day, since she went to London with Mr. Armadale! She may be married to him in a fortnight! She may be married to him this morning! I can't wait! I can't wait!"

"There's no knowing what you can do till you try," rejoined Bashwood the younger. "Try; and you'll find you *can* wait. What has become of your curiosity?" he went on, feeding the fire ingeniously with a stick at a time. "Why don't you ask me what I mean by calling Miss Gwilt a public character? Why don't you wonder how I came to lay my hand on the story of her life, in black and white? If you'll sit down again, I'll tell you. If you won't, I shall confine myself to my breakfast."

Mr. Bashwood sighed heavily, and went back to his chair.

"I wish you were not so fond of your joke, Jemmy," he said; "I wish, my dear, you were not quite so fond of your joke."

"Joke?" repeated his son. "It would be serious enough in some people's eyes, I can tell you. Miss Gwilt has been tried for her life; and the papers in that black bag are the lawyer's instructions for the Defence. Do you call that a joke?"

The father started to his feet, and looked straight across the table at the son with a smile of exultation that was terrible to see.

"She's been tried for her life!" he burst out, with a deep gasp of satisfaction. "She's been tried for her life!" He broke into a low prolonged laugh, and snapped his fingers exultingly. "Aha-ha-ha! Something to frighten Mr. Armadale in *that*!"

Scoundrel as he was, the son was daunted by the explosion of pent-up passion which burst on him in those words.

"Don't excite yourself," he said, with a sullen suppression of the mocking manner in which he had spoken thus far.

Mr. Bashwood sat down again, and passed his handkerchief over his forehead. "No," he said, nodding and smiling at his son. "No, no—no excitement, as you say—I can wait now, Jemmy; I can wait now."

He waited with immovable patience. At intervals, he nodded, and smiled, and whispered to himself, "Something to frighten Mr. Armadale in *that*!" But he made no further attempt, by word, look, or action to hurry his son.

Bashwood the younger finished his breakfast slowly, out of pure bravado; lit a cigar, with the utmost deliberation; looked at his father, and, seeing him still as immovably patient as ever, opened the black bag at last, and spread the papers on the table.

"How will you have it?" he asked. "Long or short? I have got her whole life here. The counsel who defended her at the trial was instructed to hammer hard at the sympathies of the jury: he went head over ears into the miseries of her past career, and shocked everybody in court in the most workmanlike manner. Shall I take the same line? Do you want to know all about her, from the time when she was in short frocks and frilled trousers? or do you prefer getting on at once to her first appearance as a prisoner in the dock?"

"I want to know all about her," said his father eagerly. "The worst, and the best—the worst, particularly. Don't spare my feelings, Jemmy—whatever you do, don't spare my feelings! Can't I look at the papers myself?"

"No, you can't. They would be all Greek and Hebrew to you. Thank your stars that you have got a sharp son, who can take the pith out of these papers, and give it a smack of the right flavour in serving it up. There are not ten men in England who could tell you this woman's story as I can tell it. It's a gift, old gentleman, of the sort that is given to very few people—and it lodges here."

He tapped his forehead smartly, and turned to the first page of the manuscript before him, with an unconcealed triumph at the prospect of exhibiting his own cleverness, which was the first expression of a genuine feeling of any sort that had escaped him yet.

"Miss Gwalt's story begins," said Bashwood the younger, "in the market-place at Thorpe-Ambrose. One day, something like a quarter of a century ago, a travelling quack-doctor, who dealt in perfumery as well as medicines, came to the town, with his cart, and exhibited, as a living example of the excellence of his washes and hair-oils and so on, a pretty little girl, with a beautiful complexion and wonderful hair. His name was Oldershaw. He had a wife, who helped him in the perfumery part of his business, and who carried it on by herself after his death. She has risen in the world of late years; and she is identical with that sly old lady who employed me professionally a short time since. As for the pretty little girl, you know who she was as well as I do. While the quack was haranguing the mob, and showing them the child's hair, a young lady, driving through the market-place, stopped her carriage to hear what it was all about; saw the little girl; and took a violent fancy to her on the spot. The young lady was the daughter of Mr. Blanchard, of Thorpe-Ambrose. She went home, and interested her father in the fate of the innocent little victim of the quack doctor. The same evening, the Oldershaws were sent for to the great house, and were questioned. They declared themselves to be her uncle and aunt—a lie, of course!—and they were quite willing to let her attend the village school, while they stayed at Thorpe-Ambrose, when the proposal was made to them. The new arrangement was carried out the next day. And the day after that, the Oldershaws had disappeared, and had left the little girl on the

squire's hands ! She evidently hadn't answered as they expected in the capacity of an advertisement—and that was the way they took of providing for her for life. There is the first act of the play for you ! Clear enough, so far, isn't it ? ”

“ Clear enough, Jemmy, to clever people. But I'm old and slow. I don't understand one thing. Whose child was she ? ”

“ A very sensible question. Sorry to inform you that nobody can answer it—Miss Gwilt herself included. These Instructions that I'm referring to are founded, of course, on her own statements, sifted by her attorney. All she could remember, on being questioned, was, that she was beaten and half starved, somewhere in the country, by a woman who took in children at nurse. The woman had a card with her, stating that her name was Lydia Gwilt, and got a yearly allowance for taking care of her (paid through a lawyer), till she was eight years old. At that time, the allowance stopped ; the lawyer had no explanation to offer ; nobody came to look after her ; nobody wrote. The Oldershaws saw her, and thought she might answer to exhibit ; and the woman parted with her for a trifle to the Oldershaws ; and the Oldershaws parted with her for good and all to the Blanchards. That's the story of her birth, parentage, and education ! She may be the daughter of a Duke, or the daughter of a costermonger. The circumstances may be highly romantic, or utterly commonplace. Fancy anything you like—there's nothing to stop you. When you've had your fancy out, say the word, and I'll turn over the leaves and go on.”

“ Please to go on, Jemmy—please to go on.”

“ The next glimpse of Miss Gwilt,” resumed Bashwood the younger, turning over the papers, “ is a glimpse at a family mystery. The deserted child was in luck's way at last. She had taken the fancy of an amiable young lady with a rich father, and she was petted and made much of at the great house, in the character of Miss Blanchard's last new plaything. Not long afterwards Mr. Blanchard and his daughter went abroad, and took the girl with them in the capacity of Miss Blanchard's little maid. When they came back, the daughter had married, and become a widow, in the interval ; and the pretty little maid, instead of returning with them to Thorpe-Ambrose, turns up suddenly, all alone, as a pupil at a school in France. There she was, at a first-rate establishment, with her maintenance and education secured until she married and settled in life, on this understanding,—that she never returned to England. Those were all the particulars she could be prevailed on to give the lawyer who drew up these instructions. She declined to say what had happened abroad ; she declined even, after all the years that had passed, to mention her mistress's married name. It's quite clear, of course, that she was in possession of some family secret ; and that the Blanchards paid for her schooling on the Continent to keep her out of the way. And it's equally plain that she would never have kept her secret as she did, if she had not seen her way to trading on it for her own advantage at some future time. A clever woman,

as I've told you already! A devilish clever woman, who hasn't been knocked about in the world, and seen the ups and downs of life abroad and at home for nothing."

"Yes, yes, Jemmy; quite true. How long did she stop, please, at the school in France?"

Bashwood the younger referred to the papers.

"She stopped at the French school," he replied, "till she was seventeen. At that time, something happened at the school which I find mildly described in these papers as 'something unpleasant.' The plain fact was, that the music-master attached to the establishment fell in love with Miss Gwilt. He was a respectable middle-aged man, with a wife and family—and finding the circumstances entirely hopeless, he took a pistol, and rashly assuming that he had brains in his head, tried to blow them out. The doctors saved his life, but not his reason—he ended, where he had better have begun, in an asylum. Miss Gwilt's beauty having been at the bottom of the scandal, it was of course impossible—though she was proved to have been otherwise quite blameless in the matter—for her to remain at the school after what had happened. Her 'friends' (the Blanchards) were communicated with. And her friends transferred her to another school; at Brussels, this time.—What are you sighing about? what's wrong now?"

"I can't help feeling a little for the poor music-master, Jemmy. Go on."

"According to her own account of it, dad, Miss Gwilt seems to have felt for him too. She took a serious turn; and was 'converted' (as they call it) by the lady who had charge of her in the interval before she went to Brussels. The priest at the Belgian school appears to have been a man of some discretion, and to have seen that the girl's sensibilities were getting into a dangerously excited state. Before he could quiet her down, he fell ill, and was succeeded by another priest, who was a fanatic. You will understand the sort of interest he took in the girl, and the way in which he worked on her feelings, when I tell you that she announced it as her decision, after having been nearly two years at the school, to end her days in a convent! You may well stare! Miss Gwilt, in the character of a Nun, is the sort of female phenomenon you don't often set eyes on. Women are queer creatures."

"Did she go into the convent?" asked Mr. Bashwood. "Did they let her go in, so friendless and so young, with nobody to advise her for the best?"

"The Blanchards were consulted, as a matter of form," pursued Bashwood the younger. "They had no objection to her shutting herself up in a convent, as you may well imagine. The pleasantest letter they ever had from her, I'll answer for it, was the letter in which she solemnly took leave of them in this world for ever. The people at the convent were as careful as usual not to commit themselves. Their rules wouldn't allow her to take the veil till she had tried the life for a year first, and

then, if she had any doubt, for another year after that. She tried the life for the first year, accordingly—and doubted. She tried it for the second year—and was wise enough, by that time, to give it up without further hesitation. Her position was rather an awkward one when she found herself at liberty again. The sisters at the convent had lost their interest in her; the mistress at the school declined to take her back as teacher, on the ground that she was too nice-looking for the place; the priest considered her to be possessed by the devil. There was nothing for it but to write to the Blanchards again, and ask them to start her in life as a teacher of music on her own account. She wrote to her former mistress accordingly. Her former mistress had evidently doubted the genuineness of the girl's resolution to be a nun, and had seized the opportunity offered by the farewell letter of three years since to cut off all further communication between her ex-waiting maid and herself. Miss Gwilt's letter was returned by the post-office. She caused inquiries to be made; and found that Mr. Blanchard was dead, and that his daughter had left the great house for some place of retirement unknown. The next thing she did, upon this, was to write to the heir in possession of the estate. The letter was answered by his solicitors, who were instructed to put the law in force at the first attempt she made to extort money from any member of the family at Thorpe-Ambrose. The last chance was to get at the address of her mistress's place of retirement. The family bankers, to whom she wrote, wrote back to say that they were instructed not to give the lady's address to any one applying for it, without being previously empowered to do so by the lady herself. That last letter settled the question—Miss Gwilt could do nothing more. With money at her command, she might have gone to England, and made the Blanchards think twice before they carried things with too high a hand. Not having a halfpenny at command, she was helpless. Without money and without friends, you may wonder how she supported herself while the correspondence was going on. She supported herself by playing the pianoforte at a low concert-room in Brussels. The men laid siege to her, of course, in all directions—but they found her insensible as adamant. One of these rejected gentlemen was a Russian; and he was the means of making her acquainted with a countrywoman of his—whose name is unpronounceable by English lips. Let us give her her title, and call her the Baroness. The two women liked each other at their first introduction; and a new scene opened in Miss Gwilt's life. She became reader and companion to the Baroness. Everything was right, everything was smooth on the surface. Everything was rotten and everything was wrong, under it."

"In what way, Jemmy? Please to wait a little, and tell me in what way."

"In this way. The Baroness was fond of travelling, and she had a select set of friends about her, who were quite of her way of thinking. They went from one city on the Continent to another, and were such charming people that they picked up acquaintances everywhere. The

acquaintances were invited to the Baroness's receptions—and card-tables were invariably a part of the Baroness's furniture. Do you see it now? or must I tell you, in the strictest confidence, that cards were not considered sinful on these festive occasions, and that the luck, at the end of the evening, turned out to be almost invariably on the side of the Baroness and her friends. Swindlers, all of them—and there isn't a doubt on my mind, whatever there may be on yours, that Miss Gwilt's manners and appearance made her a valuable member of the society in the capacity of a decoy. Her own statement is, that she was innocent of all knowledge of what really went on; that she was quite ignorant of card-playing; that she hadn't such a thing as a respectable friend to turn to in the world; and that she honestly liked the Baroness, for the simple reason that the Baroness was a hearty good friend to her from first to last. Believe that or not, as you please. For five years she travelled about all over the Continent, with these card-sharpers in high life, and she might have been among them at this moment, for anything I know to the contrary, if the Baroness had not caught a Tartar at Naples, in the shape of a rich travelling Englishman, named Waldron. Aha! that name startles you, does it? You've read the Trial of the famous Mrs. Waldron, like the rest of the world? And you know who Miss Gwilt is now, without my telling you?"

He paused, and looked at his father in sudden perplexity. Far from being overwhelmed by the discovery which had just burst on him, Mr. Bashwood, after the first natural movement of surprise, faced his son with a self-possession which was nothing short of extraordinary under the circumstances. There was a new brightness in his eyes, and a new colour in his face. If it had been possible to conceive such a thing of a man in his position, he seemed to be absolutely encouraged instead of depressed by what he had just heard. "Go on, Jemmy," he said, quietly; "I am one of the few people who didn't read the Trial—I only heard of it."

Still wondering inwardly, Bashwood the younger recovered himself, and went on.

"You always were, and you always will be, behind the age," he said. "When we come to the Trial, I can tell you as much about it as you need know. In the meantime, we must go back to the Baroness and Mr. Waldron. For a certain number of nights the Englishman let the card-sharpers have it all their own way—in other words, he paid for the privilege of making himself agreeable to Miss Gwilt. When he thought he had produced the necessary impression on her, he exposed the whole confederacy without mercy. The police interfered; the Baroness found herself in prison; and Miss Gwilt was put between the two alternatives of accepting Mr. Waldron's protection, or being thrown on the world again. She was amazingly virtuous, or amazingly clever, which you please. To Mr. Waldron's astonishment, she told him that she could face the prospect of being thrown on the world; and that he must address her honourably or leave her for ever. The end of it was what the end always is,

where the man is infatuated and the woman is determined. To the disgust of his family and friends, Mr. Waldron made a virtue of necessity, and married her."

"How old was he?" asked Bashwood the elder eagerly.

Bashwood the younger burst out laughing. "He was about old enough, daddy, to be your son, and rich enough to have burst that precious pocket-book of yours with thousand-pound notes! Don't hang your head. It wasn't a happy marriage, though he *was* so young and so rich. They lived abroad, and got on well enough at first. He made a new will, of course, as soon as he was married, and provided handsomely for his wife, under the tender pressure of the honeymoon. But women wear out, like other things, with time; and one fine morning Mr. Waldron woke up with a doubt in his mind whether he had not acted like a fool. He was an ill-tempered man; he was discontented with himself; and of course he made his wife feel it. Having begun by quarrelling with her, he got on to suspecting her, and became savagely jealous of every male creature who entered the house. They had no incumbrances in the shape of children, and they moved from one place to another, just as his jealousy inclined him, till they moved back to England at last, after having been married close on four years. He had a lonely old house of his own among the Yorkshire moors, and there he shut his wife and himself up from every living creature, except his servants and his dogs. Only one result could come, of course, of treating a high-spirited young woman in that way. It may be fate, or it may be chance—but, whenever a woman is desperate, there is sure to be a man handy to take advantage of it. The man in this case was rather a 'dark horse,' as they say on the turf. He was a certain Captain Manuel, a native of Cuba, and (according to his own account) an ex-officer in the Spanish navy. He had met Mr. Waldron's beautiful wife on the journey back to England; had contrived to speak to her in spite of her husband's jealousy; and had followed her to her place of imprisonment in Mr. Waldron's house on the moors. The captain is described as a clever, determined fellow—of the daring piratical sort—with the dash of mystery about him that women like——"

"She's not the same as other women!" interposed Mr. Bashwood, suddenly interrupting his son. "Did she ——?" His voice failed him, and he stopped without bringing the question to an end.

"Did she like the captain?" suggested Bashwood the younger with another laugh. "According to her own account of it, she adored him. At the same time her conduct (as represented by herself) was perfectly innocent. Considering how carefully her husband watched her, the statement (incredible as it appears) is probably true. For six weeks or so, they confined themselves to corresponding privately; the Cuban captain (who spoke and wrote English perfectly,) having contrived to make a go-between of one of the female servants in the Yorkshire house. How it might have ended we needn't trouble ourselves to inquire—Mr. Waldron himself brought matters to a crisis. Whether he got wind

of the clandestine correspondence or not, doesn't appear. But this is certain, that he came home from a ride one day, in a fiercer temper than usual—that his wife showed him a sample of that high spirit of hers which he had never yet been able to break—and that it ended in his striking her across the face with his riding-whip. Ungentlemanly conduct, I am afraid we must admit; but to all outward appearance, the riding-whip produced the most astonishing results. From that moment, the lady submitted as she had never submitted before. For a fortnight afterwards, he did what he liked; and she never thwarted him—he said what he liked; and she never uttered a word of protest. Some men might have suspected this sudden reformation of hiding something dangerous under the surface. Whether Mr. Waldron looked at it in that light, I can't tell you. All that is known is, that before the mark of the whip was off his wife's face, he fell ill, and that in two days afterwards, he was a dead man. What do you say to that?"

"I say he deserved it!" answered Mr. Bashwood, striking his hand excitedly on the table, as his son paused, and looked at him.

"The doctor who attended the dying man was not of your way of thinking," remarked Bashwood the younger, drily. "He called in two other medical men, and they all three refused to certify the death. The usual legal investigation followed. The evidence of the doctors and the evidence of the servants pointed irresistibly in one and the same direction; and Mrs. Waldron was committed for trial, on the charge of murdering her husband by poison. A solicitor in first-rate criminal practice was sent for from London, to get up the prisoner's defence—and these 'Instructions' took their form and shape accordingly. What's the matter? What do you want now?"

Suddenly rising from his chair, Mr. Bashwood stretched across the table, and tried to take the papers from his son. "I want to look at them," he burst out eagerly. "I want to see what they say about the captain from Cuba. He was at the bottom of it, Jemmy—I'll swear he was at the bottom of it!"

"Nobody doubted that, who was in the secret of the case at the time," rejoined his son. "But nobody could prove it. Sit down again, dad, and compose yourself. There's nothing here about Captain Manuel but the lawyer's private suspicions of him, for the counsel to act on or not, at the counsel's discretion. From first to last, she persisted in screening the captain. At the outset of the business, she volunteered two statements to the lawyer—both of which he suspected to be false. In the first place, she declared that she was innocent of the crime. He wasn't surprised, of course, so far; his clients were, as a general rule, in the habit of deceiving him in that way. In the second place, while admitting her private correspondence with the Cuban captain, she declared that the letters on both sides related solely to a proposed elopement, to which her husband's barbarous treatment had induced her to consent. The lawyer naturally asked to see the letters. 'He has burnt all my letters, and I have burnt

all his,' was the only answer he got. It was quite possible that Captain Manuel might have burnt *her* letters, when he heard there was a coroner's inquest in the house. But it was in her solicitor's experience (as it is in my experience too) that when a woman is fond of a man, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, risk or no risk, she keeps his letters. Having his suspicions roused in this way, the lawyer privately made some inquiries about the foreign captain—and found that he was as short of money as a foreign captain could be. At the same time, he put some questions to his client about her expectations from her deceased husband. She answered, in high indignation, that a will had been found among her husband's papers, privately executed only a few days before his death, and leaving her no more, out of all his immense fortune, than five thousand pounds. 'Was there an older will, then,' says the lawyer, 'which the new will revoked?' Yes, there was; a will that he had given into her own possession; a will made when they were first married. 'Leaving his widow well provided for?' Leaving her just ten times as much as the second will left her. 'Had she ever mentioned that first will, now revoked, to Captain Manuel?' She saw the trap set for her—and said, 'No, never!' without an instant's hesitation. That reply confirmed the lawyer's suspicions. He tried to frighten her by declaring that her life might pay the forfeit of her deceiving him in this matter. With the usual obstinacy of women, she remained just as immovable as ever. The captain, on his side, behaved in the most exemplary manner. He confessed to planning the elopement; he declared that he had burnt all the lady's letters as they reached him, out of regard for her reputation; he remained in the neighbourhood; and he volunteered to attend before the magistrates. Nothing was discovered that could legally connect him with the crime—or that could put him into court on the day of the Trial, in any other capacity than the capacity of a witness. I don't believe myself that there's any moral doubt (as they call it) that Manuel knew of the will which left her mistress of fifty thousand pounds; and that he was ready and willing, in virtue of that circumstance, to marry her on Mr. Waldron's death. If anybody tempted her to effect her own release from her husband by making herself a widow, the captain must have been the man. And unless she contrived, guarded and watched as she was, to get the poison for herself, the poison must have come to her in one of the captain's letters."

"I don't believe she used it, if it did come to her!" exclaimed Mr. Bashwood. "I believe it was the captain himself who poisoned her husband!"

Bashwood the younger, without noticing the interruption, folded up the Instructions for the Defence, which had now served their purpose; put them back in his bag; and produced a printed pamphlet in their place.

"Here is one of the published Reports of the Trial," he said, "which you can read at your leisure, if you like. We needn't waste time now by going into details. I have told you already how cleverly her counsel

paved his way for treating the charge of murder, as the crowning calamity of the many that had already fallen on an innocent woman. The two legal points relied on for the defence (after this preliminary flourish) were:—First, that there was no evidence to connect her with the possession of poison; and, secondly, that the medical witnesses, while positively declaring that her husband had died by poison, differed in their conclusions as to the particular drug that had killed him. Both good points, and both well worked; but the evidence on the other side bore down everything before it. The prisoner was proved to have had no less than three excellent reasons for killing her husband. He had treated her with almost unexampled barbarity; he had left her in a will (unrevoked so far as she knew) mistress of a fortune on his death; and she was by her own confession contemplating an elopement with another man. Having set forth these motives, the prosecution next showed by evidence, which was never once shaken on any single point, that the one person in the house who could by any human possibility have administered the poison, was the prisoner at the bar. What could the judge and jury do, with such evidence before them as this? The verdict was Guilty, as a matter of course; and the judge declared that he agreed with it. The female part of the audience was in hysterics; and the male part was not much better. The judge sobbed, and the Bar shuddered. She was sentenced to death in such a scene as had never been previously witnessed in an English Court of Justice. And she is alive and hearty at the present moment; free to do any mischief she pleases, and to poison at her own entire convenience, any man, woman, or child that happens to stand in her way. A most interesting woman! Keep on good terms with her, my dear sir, whatever you do—for the Law has said to her in the plainest possible English, ‘My charming friend, I have no terrors for you!’”

“How was she pardoned?” asked Mr. Bashwood breathlessly. “They told me at the time—but I have forgotten. Was it the Home-Secretary? If it was, I respect the Home-Secretary! I say the Home-Secretary was deserving of his place.”

“Quite right, old gentleman!” rejoined Bashwood the younger. “The Home-Secretary was the obedient humble servant of an enlightened Free Press—and he *was* deserving of his place. Is it possible you don’t know how she cheated the gallows? If you don’t I must tell you. On the evening of the Trial, two or three of the young Buccaneers of Literature went down to two or three newspaper offices, and wrote two or three heartrending leading articles on the subject of the proceedings in court. The next morning the public caught light like tinder; and the prisoner was tried over again, before an amateur court of justice, in the columns of the newspapers. All the people who had no personal experience whatever on the subject, seized their pens, and rushed (by kind permission of the editor) into print. Doctors who had *not* attended the sick man, and who had *not* been present at the examination of the body, declared by dozens that he had died a natural death. Barristers without business,

who had *not* heard the evidence, attacked the jury who *had* heard it, and judged the Judge, who had sat on the bench before some of them were born. The general public followed the lead of the barristers and the doctors, and the young Buccaniers who had set the thing going. Here was the Law that they all paid to protect them, actually doing its duty in dreadful earnest! Shocking! shocking! The British Public rose to protest as one man against the working of its own machinery; and the Home-Secretary, in a state of distraction, went to the Judge. The Judge held firm. He had said it was the right verdict at the time, and he said so still. 'But suppose,' says the Home-Secretary, 'that the prosecution had tried some other way of proving her guilty at the trial than the way they did try—what would you and the jury have done then?' Of course it was quite impossible for the Judge to say. This comforted the Home-Secretary, to begin with. And, when he got the Judge's consent, after that, to having the conflict of medical evidence submitted to one great doctor; and when the one great doctor took the merciful view, after expressly stating, in the first instance, that he knew nothing practically of the merits of the case, the Home-Secretary was perfectly satisfied. The prisoner's death-warrant went into the waste-paper basket; the verdict of the Law was reversed by general acclamation; and the verdict of the newspapers carried the day. But the best of it is to come. You know what happened when the people found themselves with the pet object of their sympathy suddenly cast loose on their hands? A general impression prevailed directly that she was not quite innocent enough, after all, to be let out of prison then and there! Punish her a little—that was the state of the popular feeling—punish her a little, Mr. Home-Secretary, on general moral grounds. A small course of gentle legal medicine, if you love us—and then we shall feel perfectly easy on the subject to the end of our days."

"Don't joke about it!" cried his father. "Don't, don't, don't, Jemmy! Did they try her again? They couldn't! they durs'n't! Nobody can be tried twice over for the same offence."

"Pooh! pooh! she could be tried a second time for a second offence," retorted Bashwood the younger—"and tried she was. Luckily for the pacification of the public mind, she had rushed headlong into redressing her own grievances (as women will), when she discovered that her husband had cut her down from a legacy of fifty thousand pounds to a legacy of five thousand, by a stroke of his pen. The day before the Inquest a locked drawer in Mr. Waldron's dressing-room table, which contained some valuable jewellery, was discovered to have been opened and emptied—and when the prisoner was committed by the magistrates, the precious stones were found torn out of their settings, and sewn up in her stays. The lady considered it a case of justifiable self-compensation. The Law declared it to be a robbery committed on the executors of the dead man. The lighter offence—which had been passed over, when such a charge as murder was brought against her—was just the thing to revive, to save

appearances in the eyes of the public. They had stopped the course of justice, in the case of the prisoner, at one trial; and now all they wanted was to set the course of justice going again, in the case of the prisoner, at another! She was arraigned for the robbery, after having been pardoned for the murder. And, what is more, if her beauty and her misfortunes hadn't made a strong impression on her lawyer, she would not only have had to stand another trial, but would have had even the five thousand pounds, to which she was entitled by the second will, taken away from her, as a felon, by the Crown."

"I respect her lawyer! I admire her lawyer!" exclaimed Mr. Bashwood. "I should like to take his hand, and tell him so."

"He wouldn't thank you, if you did," remarked Bashwood the younger. "He is under a comfortable impression that nobody knows how he saved Mrs. Waldron's legacy for her but himself."

"I beg your pardon, Jemmy," interposed his father. "But don't call her Mrs. Waldron. Speak of her, please, by her name when she was innocent and young, and a girl at school. Would you mind, for my sake, calling her Miss Gwilt?"

"Not I! It makes no difference to me what name I give her. Bother your sentiment! let's get on with the facts. This is what the lawyer did before the second trial came off. He told her she would be found guilty *again*, to a dead certainty. 'And this time,' he said, 'the public will let the law take its course. Have you got an old friend whom you can trust?' She hadn't such a thing as an old friend in the world. 'Very well, then,' says the lawyer, 'you must trust me. Sign this paper; and you will have executed a fictitious sale of all your property to myself. When the right time comes, I shall first carefully settle with your husband's executors; and I shall then re-convey the money to you, securing it properly (in case you ever marry again) in your own possession. The Crown, in other transactions of this kind, frequently waives its right of disputing the validity of the sale—and if the Crown is no harder on you than on other people, when you come out of prison you will have your five thousand pounds to begin the world with again.'—Neat of the lawyer, when she was going to be tried for robbing the executors, to put her up to a way of robbing the Crown, wasn't it? Ha! ha! what a world it is!"

The last effort of the son's sarcasm passed unheeded by the father. "In prison!" he said to himself. "Oh me, after all that misery, in prison again!"

"Yes," said Bashwood the younger, rising and stretching himself, "that's how it ended. The verdict was Guilty; and the sentence was imprisonment for two years. She served her time; and came out, as well as I can reckon it, about three years since. If you want to know what she did when she recovered her liberty, and how she went on afterwards, I may be able to tell you something about it—say, on another occasion, when you have got an extra note or two in your pocket-book. For the present, all you need know, you do know. There isn't the shadow of a

doubt that this fascinating lady has the double slur on her, of having been found guilty of murder, and of having served her term of imprisonment for theft. There's your moneysworth for your money—with the whole of my wonderful knack at stating a case clearly, thrown in for nothing. If you have any gratitude in you, you ought to do something handsome, one of these days, for your son. But for me, I'll tell you what you would have done, old gentleman. If you could have had your own way, you would have married Miss Gwilt."

Mr. Bashwood rose to his feet; and looked his son steadily in the face.

"If I could have my own way," he said, "I would marry her now."

Bashwood the younger started back a step. "After all I have told you?" he asked, in the blankest astonishment.

"After all you have told me."

"With the chance of being poisoned, the first time you happened to offend her?"

"With the chance of being poisoned," answered Mr. Bashwood, "in four-and-twenty hours."

The Spy of the Private Inquiry Office dropped back into his chair, cowed by his father's words and his father's looks.

"Mad!" he said to himself. "Stark mad, by jingo!"

Mr. Bashwood looked at his watch, and hurriedly took his hat from a side-table.

"I should like to hear the rest of it," he said. "I should like to hear every word you have to tell me about her, to the very last. But the time, the dreadful, galloping time, is getting on. For all I know, they may be on their way to be married at this very moment."

"What are you going to do?" asked Bashwood the younger, getting between his father and the door.

"I am going to the hotel," said the old man, trying to pass him. "I am going to see Mr. Armadale."

"What for?"

"To tell him everything you have told me." He paused after making that reply. The terrible smile of triumph which had once already appeared on his face, overspread it again. "Mr. Armadale is young; Mr. Armadale has all his life before him," he whispered cunningly, with his trembling fingers clutching his son's arm. "What doesn't frighten *me* will frighten *him*!"

"Wait a minute," said Bashwood the younger. "Are you as certain as ever that Mr. Armadale is the man?"

"What man?"

"The man who is going to marry her."

"Yes! yes! yes! Let me go, Jemmy—let me go!"

The Spy set his back against the door, and considered for a moment. Mr. Armadale was rich. Mr. Armadale (if he was not stark mad, too) might be made to put the right money-value on information that saved him from the disgrace of marrying Miss Gwilt. "It may be a hundred

pounds in my pocket, if I work it myself," thought Bashwood the younger. "And it won't be a halfpenny if I leave it to my father." He took up his hat, and his leather bag. "Can you carry it all in your own addled old head, daddy?" he asked, with his easiest impudence of manner. "Not you! I'll go with you, and help-you. What do you think of that?"

The father threw his arms in an ecstasy round the son's neck. "I can't help it, Jemmy," he said, in broken tones. "You are so good to me. Take the other note, my dear—I'll manage without it—take the other note."

The son threw open the door with a flourish; and magnanimously turned his back on the father's offered pocket-book. "Hang it, old gentleman, I'm not quite so mercenary as *that*!" he said, with an appearance of the deepest feeling. "Put up your pocket-book, and let's be off.—If I took my respected parent's last five-pound note," he thought to himself, as he led the way downstairs, "how do I know he mightn't cry halves when he sees the colour of Mr. Armadale's money?—Come along, dad!" he resumed. "We'll take a cab and catch the happy bridegroom before he starts for the church!"

They hailed a cab in the street, and started for the hotel which had been the residence of Midwinter and Allan during their stay in London. The instant the door of the vehicle had closed, Mr. Bashwood returned to the subject of Miss Gwilt.

"Tell me the rest," he said, taking his son's hand, and patting it tenderly. "Let's go on talking about her all the way to the hotel. Help me through the time, Jemmy—help me through the time."

Bashwood the younger was in high spirits at the prospect of seeing the colour of Mr. Armadale's money. He trifled with his father's anxiety to the very last.

"Let's see if you remember what I've told you already," he began. "There's a character in the story that's dropped out of it without being accounted for. Come! can you tell me who it is?"

He had reckoned on finding his father unable to answer the question. But Mr. Bashwood's memory, for anything that related to Miss Gwilt, was as clear and ready as his son's. "The foreign scoundrel who tempted her, and let her screen him at the risk of her own life," he said, without an instant's hesitation. "Don't speak of him, Jemmy, don't speak of him again!"

"I *must* speak of him," retorted the other. "You want to know what became of Miss Gwilt, when she got out of prison, don't you? Very good—I'm in a position to tell you. She became Mrs. Manuel. It's no use staring at me, old gentleman. I know it officially. At the latter part of last year, a foreign lady came to our place, with evidence to prove that she had been lawfully married to Captain Manuel, at a former period of his career, when he had visited England for the first time. She had only lately discovered that he had been in this country again; and she had reason to believe that he had married another woman in Scotland,

Our people were employed to make the necessary inquiries. Comparison of dates showed that the Scotch marriage—if it was a marriage at all, and not a sham—had taken place just about the time when Miss Gwilt was a free woman again. And a little further investigation showed us that the second Mrs. Manuel was no other than the heroine of the famous criminal trial—whom we didn't know then, but whom we do know now, to be identical with your fascinating friend, Miss Gwilt."

Mr. Bashwood's head sank on his breast. He clasped his trembling hands fast in each other, and waited in silence to hear the rest.

"Cheer up!" pursued his son. "She was no more the captain's wife than you are—and what is more, the captain himself is out of your way now. One foggy day in December last, he gave us the slip, and was off to the Continent, nobody knew where. He had spent the whole of the second Mrs. Manuel's five thousand pounds, in the time that had elapsed (between two and three years) since she had come out of prison—and the wonder was, where he had got the money to pay his travelling expenses. It turned out that he had got it from the second Mrs. Manuel herself. She had filled his empty pockets; and there she was, waiting confidently in a miserable London lodging, to hear from him and join him as soon as he was safely settled in foreign parts! Where had *she* got the money, you may ask naturally enough? Nobody could tell at the time. My own notion is, now, that her former mistress must have been still living, and that she must have turned her knowledge of the Blanchards' family secret to profitable account at last. This is mere guess-work of course; but there's a circumstance that makes it likely guess-work, to my mind. She had an elderly female friend to apply to at the time, who was just the woman to help her in ferreting out her mistress's address. Can you guess the name of the elderly female friend? Not you! Mrs. Oldershaw of course!"

Mr. Bashwood suddenly looked up. "Why should she go back," he asked, "to the woman who had deserted her when she was a child?"

"I can't say," rejoined his son, "unless she went back in the interests of her own magnificent head of hair. The prison-scissors, I needn't tell you, had made short work of it with Miss Gwilt's love-locks, in every sense of the word—and Mrs. Oldershaw, I beg to add, is the most eminent woman in England, as Restorer-General of the dilapidated heads and faces of the female sex. Put two and two together; and perhaps you'll agree with me, in this case, that they make four."

"Yes, yes; two and two make four," repeated his father, impatiently. "But I want to know something else. Did she hear from him again? Did he send for her after he had gone away to foreign parts?"

"The captain? Why, what on earth can you be thinking of? Hadn't he spent every farthing of her money? and wasn't he loose on the Continent out of her reach? She waited to hear from him, I daresay, for she persisted in believing in him. But I'll lay you any wager you like, she never saw the sight of his handwriting again. We did our best at the

office to open her eyes—we told her plainly that he had a first wife living, and that she hadn't the shadow of a claim on him. She wouldn't believe us, though we met her with the evidence. Obstinate, devilish obstinate. I daresay she waited for months together before she gave up the last hope of ever seeing him again."

Mr. Bashwood looked aside quickly out of the cab window. "Where could she turn for refuge next?" he said, not to his son, but to himself. "What, in heaven's name, could she do?"

"Judging by my experience of women," remarked Bashwood the younger, overhearing him, "I should say she probably tried to drown herself. But that's only guess-work again—it's all guess-work at this part of her story. You catch me at the end of my evidence, dad, when you come to Miss Gwilt's proceedings in the spring and summer of the present year. She might, or she might not, have been desperate enough to attempt suicide; and she might, or she might not, have been at the bottom of those inquiries that I made for Mrs. Oldershaw. I daresay you'll see her this morning, and perhaps, if you use your influence, you may be able to make her finish her own story herself."

Mr. Bashwood, still looking out of the cab window, suddenly laid his hand on his son's arm.

"Hush! hush!" he exclaimed, in violent agitation. "We have got there at last. Oh, Jemmy, feel how my heart beats! Here is the hotel."

"Bother your heart," said Bashwood the younger. "Wait here while I make the inquiries."

"I'll come with you!" cried his father. "I can't wait! I tell you, I can't wait!"

They went into the hotel together, and asked for "Mr. Armadale."

The answer, after some little hesitation and delay, was that Mr. Armadale had gone away six days since. A second waiter added, that Mr. Armadale's friend—Mr. Midwinter—had only left that morning. Where had Mr. Armadale gone? Somewhere into the country. Where had Mr. Midwinter gone? Nobody knew.

Mr. Bashwood looked at his son in speechless and helpless dismay.

"Stuff and nonsense!" said Bashwood the younger, pushing his father back roughly into the cab. "He's safe enough. We shall find him at Miss Gwilt's."

The old man took his son's hand and kissed it. "Thank you, my dear," he said, gratefully. "Thank you for comforting me."

The cab was driven next to the second lodging which Miss Gwilt had occupied, in the neighbourhood of Tottenham Court Road.

"Stop here," said the Spy, getting out, and shutting his father into the cab. "I mean to manage this part of the business myself."

He knocked at the house door. "I have got a note for Miss Gwilt," he said, walking into the passage, the moment the door was opened.

"She's gone," answered the servant. "She went away last night."

Bashwood the younger wasted no more words with the servant. He

insisted on seeing the mistress. The mistress confirmed the announcement of Miss Gwilt's departure on the previous evening. Where had she gone to? The woman couldn't say. How had she left? On foot. At what hour? Between nine and ten. What had she done with her luggage? She had no luggage. Had a gentleman been to see her on the previous day? Not a soul, gentle or simple, had come to the house to see Miss Gwilt.

The father's face, pale and wild, was looking out of the cab window, as the son descended the house-steps. "Isn't she there, Jemmy?" he asked faintly—"Isn't she there?"

"Hold your tongue," cried the Spy, with the native coarseness of his nature rising to the surface at last. "I'm not at the end of my inquiries yet."

He crossed the road, and entered a coffee-shop situated exactly opposite the house he had just left.

In the box nearest the window two men were sitting talking together anxiously.

"Which of you was on duty yesterday evening, between nine and ten o'clock?" asked Bashwood the younger, suddenly joining them, and putting his question in a quick peremptory whisper.

"I was, sir," said one of the men, unwillingly.

"Did you lose sight of the house?—Yes! I see you did."

"Only for a minute, sir. An infernal blackguard of a soldier came in——"

"That will do," said Bashwood the younger. "I know what the soldier did, and who sent him to do it. She has given us the slip again. You are the greatest Ass living. Consider yourself dismissed." With those words, and with an oath to emphasize them, he left the coffee-shop and returned to the cab.

"She's gone!" cried his father. "Oh, Jemmy, Jemmy, I see it in your face!" He fell back into his own corner of the cab, with a faint wailing cry. "They're married," he moaned to himself; his hands falling helplessly on his knees; his hat falling unregarded from his head. "Stop them!" he exclaimed, suddenly rousing himself, and seizing his son in a frenzy by the collar of the coat.

"Go back to the hotel," shouted Bashwood the younger, to the cabman. "Hold your noise!" he added, turning fiercely on his father. "I want to think."

The varnish of smoothness was all off him by this time. His temper was roused. His pride—even such a man has his pride!—was wounded to the quick. Twice had he matched his wits against a woman's; and twice the woman had baffled him.

He got out, on reaching the hotel for the second time; and privately tried the servants with the offer of money. The result of the experiment satisfied him that they had, in this instance, really and truly, no information to sell. After a moment's reflection, he stopped, before leaving the hotel, to ask the way to the parish church. "The chance may be worth trying,"

he thought to himself, as he gave the address to the driver. "Faster!" he called out, looking first at his watch, and then at his father. "The minutes are precious this morning; and the old one is beginning to give in."

It was true. Still capable of hearing and of understanding, Mr. Bashwood was past speaking by this time. He clung with both hands to his son's grudging arm, and let his head fall helplessly on his son's averted shoulder.

The parish church stood back from the street, protected by gates and railings, and surrounded by a space of open ground. Shaking off his father's hold, Bashwood the younger made straight for the vestry. The clerk, putting away the books, and the clerk's assistant, hanging up a surplice, were the only persons in the room when he entered it, and asked leave to look at the marriage Register for the day.

The clerk gravely opened the book, and stood aside from the desk on which it lay.

The day's register comprised three marriages solemnized that morning—and the first two signatures on the page, were "Allan Armadale" and "Lydia Gwilt!"

Even the Spy—ignorant as he was of the truth; unsuspicious as he was of the terrible future consequences to which the act of that morning might lead—even the Spy started, when his eye first fell on the page. It was done! Come what might of it, it was done now. There, in black and white, was the registered evidence of the marriage, which was at once a truth in itself, and a lie in the conclusion to which it led! There—through the fatal similarity in the names—there, in Midwinter's own signature, was the proof to persuade everybody that, not Midwinter, but Allan, was the husband of Miss Gwilt!

Bashwood the younger closed the book and returned it to the clerk. He descended the vestry steps with his hands thrust doggedly into his pockets, and with a serious shock inflicted on his professional self-esteem.

The beadle met him under the church wall. He considered for a moment whether it was worth while to spend a shilling in questioning the man, and decided in the affirmative. If they could be traced and overtaken, there might be a chance of seeing the colour of Mr. Armadale's money, even yet.

"How long is it," he asked, "since the first couple married here this morning, left the church?"

"About an hour," said the beadle.

"How did they go away?"

The beadle deferred answering that second question until he had first pocketed his fee. "You won't trace them from here, sir," he said, when he had got his shilling. "They were away on foot."

"And that is all you know about it?"

"That, sir, is all I know about it."

Left by himself, even the Detective of the Private Inquiry Office paused for a moment before he returned to his father at the gate. He

was roused from his hesitation by the sudden appearance, within the church enclosure, of the driver of the cab.

"I'm afraid the old gentleman is going to be taken ill, sir," said the man.

Bashwood the younger frowned angrily, and walked back to the cab. As he opened the door and looked in, his father leaned forward and confronted him, with lips that moved speechlessly, and with a white stillness over all the rest of his face.

"She's done us," said the Spy. "They were married here this morning."

The old man's body swayed for a moment from one side to the other. The instant after, his eyes closed, and his head fell forward towards the front seat of the cab. "Drive to the hospital!" cried his son. "He's in a fit. This is what comes of putting myself out of my way to please my father," he muttered, sullenly raising Mr. Bashwood's head, and loosening his cravat. "A nice morning's work. Upon my soul, a nice morning's work!"

The hospital was near, and the house-surgeon was at his post.

"Will he come out of it?" asked Bashwood the younger roughly.

"Who are *you*?" asked the surgeon sharply, on his side.

"I am his son."

"I shouldn't have thought it," rejoined the surgeon, taking the restoratives that were handed to him by the nurse, and turning from the son to the father with an air of relief which he was at no pains to conceal. "Yes," he added, after a minute or two. "Your father will come out of it, this time."

"When can he be moved away from here?"

"He can be moved from the hospital in an hour or two."

The Spy laid a card on the table. "I'll come back for him or send for him," he said. "I suppose I can go now, if I leave my name and address?" With those words, he put on his hat, and walked out.

"He's a brute!" said the nurse.

"No," said the surgeon quietly. "He's a man."

* * * * *

Between nine and ten o'clock that night, Mr. Bashwood awoke in his bed at the inn in the Borough. He had slept for some hours, since he had been brought back from the hospital; and his mind and body were now slowly recovering together.

A light was burning on the bedside-table, and a letter lay on it, waiting for him till he was awake. It was in his son's handwriting, and it contained these words:—

"MY DEAR DAD,—Having seen you safe out of the hospital, and back at your hotel, I think I may fairly claim to have done my duty by you, and may consider myself free to look after my own affairs. Business will prevent me from seeing you to-night; and I don't think it at all likely I shall be in your neighbourhood to-morrow morning. My advice to you is, to go back to Thorpe-Ambrose, and to stick to your employment in the steward's office. Wherever Mr. Armadale may be, he must, sooner or later, write to you on business. I wash my hands of the whole matter,

mind, so far as I am concerned, from this time forth. But if *you* like to go on with it, my professional opinion is (though you couldn't hinder his marriage), you may part him from his wife.

"Pray take care of yourself.

"Your affectionate son,

"JAMES BASHWOOD."

The letter dropped from the old man's feeble hands. "I wish Jemmy could have come to see me to-night," he thought. "But it's very kind of him to advise me all the same."

He turned wearily on the pillow, and read the letter a second time. "Yes," he said, "there's nothing left for me but to go back. I'm too poor and too old to hunt after them all by myself." He closed his eyes: the tears trickled slowly over his wrinkled cheeks. "I've been a trouble to Jemmy," he murmured, faintly; "I've been a sad trouble, I'm afraid, to poor Jemmy!" In a minute more his weakness overpowered him, and he fell asleep again.

The clock of the neighbouring church struck. It was ten. As the bell tolled the hour, the tidal train—with Midwinter and his wife among the passengers—was speeding nearer and nearer to Paris. As the bell tolled the hour, the watch on board Allan's outward-bound yacht, had sighted the lighthouse off the Land's End, and had set the course of the vessel for Ushant and Finisterre.

THE END OF THE FOURTH BOOK.

BOOK THE FIFTH.

CHAPTER I.

MISS GWILT'S DIARY.

"NAPLES, OCTOBER 10TH.—It is two months to-day, since I declared that I had closed my Diary, never to open it again.

"Why have I broken my resolution? Why have I gone back to this secret friend of my wretchedest and wickedest hours? Because I am more friendless than ever; because I am more lonely than ever, though my husband is sitting writing in the next room to me. My misery is a woman's misery, and it *will* speak—here, rather than nowhere; to my second self, in this book, if I have no one else to hear me.

"How happy I was in the first days that followed our marriage, and how happy I made *him*! Only two months have passed, and that time is a bygone time already! I try to think of anything I might have said or

done wrongly, on my side—of anything he might have said or done wrongly, on his—and I can remember nothing unworthy of my husband, nothing unworthy of myself. I cannot even lay my finger on the day when the cloud first rose between us.

"I could bear it, if I loved him less dearly than I do. I could conquer the misery of our estrangement if he only showed the change in him as brutally as other men would show it.

"But this never has happened, never will happen. It is not in his nature to inflict suffering on others. Not a hard word, not a hard look, escapes him. It is only at night, when I hear him sighing in his sleep; and sometimes when I see him dreaming, in the morning hours, that I know how hopelessly I am losing the love he once felt for me. He hides, or tries to hide it, in the day, for my sake. He is all gentleness, all kindness—but his heart is not on his lips, when he kisses me now; his hand tells me nothing when it touches mine. Day after day, the hours that he gives to his hateful writing grow longer and longer; day after day, he becomes more and more silent, in the hours that he gives to Me.

"And, with all this, there is nothing that I can complain of—nothing marked enough to justify me in noticing it. His disappointment shrinks from all open confession; his resignation collects itself by such fine degrees that even my watchfulness fails to see the growth of it. Fifty times a day, I feel the longing in me, to throw my arms round his neck, and say, 'For God's sake, do anything to me, rather than treat me like this!'—and fifty times a day the words are forced back into my heart by the cruel considerateness of his conduct, which gives me no excuse for speaking them. I thought I had suffered the sharpest pain that I could feel, when my first husband laid his whip across my face. I thought I knew the worst that despair could do, on the day when I knew that the other villain, the meaner villain still, had cast me off. Live and learn. There is sharper pain than I felt under Waldron's whip; there is bitterer despair than the despair I knew when Manuel deserted me.

"Am I too old for him? Surely not yet! Have I lost my beauty? Not a man passes me in the street but his eyes tell me I am as handsome as ever.

"Ah, no! no! the secret lies deeper than *that*! I have thought and thought about it, till a horrible fancy has taken possession of me. He has been noble and good in his past life, and I have been wicked and disgraced. Who can tell what a gap that dreadful difference may make between us, unknown to him and unknown to me? It is folly, it is madness—but when I lie awake by him in the darkness, I ask myself whether any unconscious disclosure of the truth escapes me in the close intimacy that now unites us? Is there an unutterable Something left by the horror of my past life, which clings invisibly to me still? And is *he* feeling the influence of it, sensibly, and yet incomprehensibly to himself? Oh me! is there no purifying power in such love as mine? Are there plague-spots of past wickedness on my heart which no after-repentance can wash out?

"Who can tell? There is something wrong in our married life—I can only come back to that. There is some adverse influence that neither he nor I can trace, which is parting us farther and farther from each other, day by day. Well! I suppose I shall be hardened in time, and learn to bear it.

"An open carriage has just driven by my window, with a nicely-dressed lady in it. She had her husband by her side, and her children on the seat opposite. At the moment when I saw her she was laughing and talking in high spirits; a sparkling, light-hearted, happy woman, Ah, my lady, when you were a few years younger, if you had been left to yourself, and thrown on the world like me ——"

"October 11th.—The eleventh day of the month was the day (two months since) when we were married. He said nothing about it to me when we woke, nor I to him. But I thought I would make it the occasion, at breakfast-time, of trying to win him back.

"I don't think I ever took such pains with my toilette before; I don't think I ever looked better than I looked when I went downstairs this morning. He had breakfasted by himself, and I found a little slip of paper on the table with an apology written on it. The post to England, he said, went out that day, and his letter to the newspaper must be finished. In his place, I would have let fifty posts go out, rather than breakfast without him. I went into his room. There he was, immersed body and soul in his hateful writing! 'Can't you give me a little time this morning?' I asked. He got up with a start. 'Certainly, if you wish it.' He never even looked at me as he said the words. The very sound of his voice told me that all his interest was centred in the pen that he had just laid down. 'I see you are occupied,' I said; 'I don't wish it.' Before I had closed the door on him he was back at his desk. I have often heard that the wives of authors have been for the most part unhappy women. And now I know why.

"I suppose, as I said yesterday, I shall learn to bear it. (What stuff, by the by, I seem to have written yesterday! how ashamed I should be if anybody saw it but myself!) I hope the trumpery newspaper he writes for won't succeed! I hope his rubbishing letter will be well cut up by some other newspaper as soon as it gets into print!

"What am I to do with myself all the morning? I can't go out,—it's ruining. If I open the piano, I shall disturb the industrious journalist who is scribbling in the next room. Oh dear! it was lonely enough in my lodging at Thorpe Ambrose, but how much lonelier it is here. Shall I read? No; books don't interest me; I hate the whole tribe of authors. I think I shall look back through these pages, and live my life over again when I was plotting and planning, and finding a new excitement to occupy me in every new hour of the day.

"He might have looked at me, though he *was* so busy with his writing. He might have said, 'How nicely you are dressed this morning!'

He might have remembered,—never mind what! All he remembers is the newspaper.

"*Twelve o'clock.*—I have been reading and thinking; and, thanks to my Diary, I have got through an hour.

"What a time it was,—what a life it was, at Thorpe-Ambrose! I wonder I kept my senses. It makes my heart beat, it makes my face flush, only to read about it now!

"The rain still falls, and the journalist still scribbles. I don't want to think the thoughts of that past time over again. And yet, what else can I do?

"Supposing—I only say supposing—I felt now, as I felt when I travelled to London with Armadale; and when I saw my way to his life as plainly as I saw the man himself all through the journey. . . ?

"I'll go and look out of window. I'll go and count the people as they pass by.

"A funeral has gone by, with the penitents in their black hoods, and the wax torches sputtering in the wet, and the little bell ringing, and the priests droning their monotonous chant. A pleasant sight to meet me at the window! I shall go back to my Diary.

"Supposing I was not the altered woman I am—I only say, supposing—how would the Grand Risk that I once thought of running, look now? I have married Midwinter in the name that is really his own. And by doing that, I have taken the first of those three steps which were once to lead me, through Armadale's life, to the fortune and the station of Armadale's widow. No matter how innocent my intentions might have been on the wedding-day—and they *were* innocent—this is one of the unalterable results of the marriage. Well, having taken the first step, then, whether I would or no, how—supposing I meant to take the second step, which I don't—how would present circumstances stand towards me? Would they warn me to draw back, I wonder? or would they encourage me to go on?

"It will interest me to calculate the chances; and I can easily tear the leaf out, and destroy it, if the prospect looks too encouraging.

"We are living here (for economy's sake), far away from the expensive English quarter, in a suburb of the city, on the Portici side. We have made no travelling acquaintances among our own country-people. Our poverty is against us; Midwinter's shyness is against us; and (with the women) my personal appearance is against us. The men from whom my husband gets his information for the newspaper, meet him at the café, and never come here. I discourage his bringing any strangers to see me; for, though years have passed since I was last at Naples, I cannot be sure that some of the many people I once knew in this place may not be living still. The moral of all this is (as the children's story-books say), that not a single witness has come to this house who could declare, if any after-inquiry took place in England, that Midwinter and I had been living here as man and wife. So much for present circumstances as they affect *Me*.

"Armada!e next. Has any unforeseen accident led him to communicate with Thorpe-Ambrose? Has he broken the conditions which the major imposed on him, and asserted himself in the character of Miss Milroy's promised husband since I saw him last?

"Nothing of the sort has taken place. No unforeseen accident has altered his position—his tempting position—towards myself. I know all that has happened to him since he left England, through the letters which he writes to Midwinter, and which Midwinter shows to me.

"He has been wrecked, to begin with. His trumpery little yacht has actually tried to drown him, after all, and has failed! It happened (as Midwinter warned him it might happen with so small a vessel) in a sudden storm. They were blown ashore on the coast of Portugal. The yacht went to pieces, but the lives, and papers, and so on, were saved. The men have been sent back to Bristol, with recommendations from their master, which have already got them employment on board an outward-bound ship. And the master himself is on his way here, after stopping first at Lisbon, and next at Gibraltar, and trying ineffectually in both places to supply himself with another vessel. His third attempt is to be made at Naples, where there is an English yacht 'laid up,' as they call it, to be had for sale or hire. He has had no occasion to write home since the wreck—for he took away from Coutts's the whole of the large sum of money lodged there for him, in circular notes. And he has felt no inclination to go back to England himself—for, with Mr. Brock dead, Miss Milroy at school, and Midwinter here, he has not a living creature in whom he is interested, to welcome him if he returned. To see us, and to see the new yacht, are the only two present objects he has in view. Midwinter has been expecting him for a week past, and he may walk into this very room in which I am writing, at this very moment, for all I know to the contrary.

"Tempting circumstances, these—with all the wrongs I have suffered at his mother's hands and at his, still alive in my memory; with Miss Milroy confidently waiting to take her place at the head of his household; with my dream of living happy and innocent in Midwinter's love, dispelled for ever, and with nothing left in its place to help me against myself. I wish it wasn't raining; I wish I could go out.

"Perhaps, something may happen to prevent Armadale from coming to Naples? When he last wrote, he was waiting at Gibraltar for an English steamer in the Mediterranean trade to bring him on here. He may get tired of waiting before the steamer comes, or he may hear of a yacht at some other place than this. A little bird whispers in my ear that it may possibly be the wisest thing he ever did in his life, if he breaks his engagement to join us at Naples.

"Shall I tear out the leaf on which all these shocking things have been written? No. My Diary is so nicely bound—it would be positive barbarity to tear out a leaf. Let me occupy myself harmlessly with something else. What shall it be? My dressing-case—I will put my

dressing-case tidy, and polish up the few little things in it which my misfortunes have still left in my possession.

"I have shut up the dressing-case again. The first thing I found in it was Armadale's shabby present to me on my marriage—the rubbishing little ruby ring. That irritated me to begin with. The second thing that turned up was my bottle of Drops. I caught myself measuring the doses with my eye, and calculating how many of them would be enough to take a living creature over the border-land between sleep and death. Why I should have locked the dressing-case in a fright, before I had quite completed my calculation, I don't know—but I did lock it. And here I am back again at my Diary, with nothing, absolutely nothing, to write about. Oh, the weary day! the weary day! Will nothing happen to excite me a little in this horrible place?

October 12th.—Midwinter's all-important letter to the newspaper was despatched by the post last night. I was foolish enough to suppose that I might be honoured by having some of his spare attention bestowed on me to-day. Nothing of the sort! He had a restless night, after all his writing, and got up with his head aching, and his spirits miserably depressed. When he is in this state, his favourite remedy is to return to his old vagabond habits, and go roaming away by himself nobody knows where. He went through the form, this morning (knowing I had no riding-habit), of offering to hire a little broken-kneed brute of a pony for me, in case I wished to accompany him! I preferred remaining at home. I will have a handsome horse and a handsome habit, or I won't ride at all. He went away, without attempting to persuade me to change my mind. I wouldn't have changed it of course; but he might have tried to persuade me all the same.

"I can open the piano, in his absence—that is one comfort. And I am in a fine humour for playing—that is another. There is a sonata of Beethoven's (I forget the number), which always suggests to me the agony of lost spirits in a place of torment. Come, my fingers and thumbs, and take me among the lost spirits, this morning!

"October 13th.—Our windows look out on the sea. At noon to-day, we saw a steamer coming in, with the English flag flying. Midwinter has gone to the port, on the chance that this may be the vessel from Gibraltar, with Armadale on board.

"Two o'clock.—It is the vessel from Gibraltar. Armadale has added one more to the long list of his blunders—he has kept his engagement to join us at Naples.

"How will it end, now?

"Who knows!"

Eccentricities in a Basket.

"BASKET" is the old-fashioned designation applied to the back compartment in our numerous three-mile and six-mile coaches, hourly plying the two stages between the large city of A——, its seaside suburb of Z——, and the harbour town of X—— farther on. The scene is very remote from town, far in the provinces of the North.

Our household being now situated at Z——, while yet bound by various ties to dear old picturesque A——, it is my own frequent lot to traverse the interval both ways; on which occasions, although a railway is equally available, I generally by preference use the coach, with a distinct partiality for "the basket" thereof.

Placed behind the carriage, it opens endways and clear of the wheels. The front section is undoubtedly much more select; but against this must be set to the account of the other end, that beside its door is stationed the "boy," who performs the duty of conductor as smartly and civilly as if he was full-grown. For all facilities of exit or entrance, this advantage is obvious; and, besides, the fare lies moderately but genteelly between that of the aristocratic front and that of the top—inaccessible in a lady's case for conventional reasons. Again, I often find in the basket some nondescript fellow-passenger of a congenial turn; and there are certain frequent characteristic contents of much interest. And, I confess, I like to hear people's genuine voices, and see their natural gestures; to hear them make known the progress of crops, the state of markets, the probable prices of oatmeal and potatoes, the actual value of fat pigs per stone. It is instructive to take distinctly into mind what any two old goodies will gossip about; to discover what can possibly break the lethargic content of a rural intelligence, which apparently, if but wheeled onwards, could gape satisfied for a hundred miles. An odd medley is composed when these mingle with the well-doing tradespeople with smug looks and insignificant remarks,—with the staid old maids, the peripatetic masters at seminaries, the recovering invalids, the brisk commercial travellers, the careful landladies of lodgings, the occasional school-girls, the pair of governesses ever separately seen, and the one provokingly-frequent woman (still a problem between housekeeper and proprietor of a mangle), who make up the average staple of our society in the coach-basket. Of course *all* does go well in the basket. Its legal limitation to six occupants at a time is rather inconveniently open to check from a by-law which fails to regulate the admission of children, or to settle how many at this or that age may fairly be compressible in the room for a single adult. However partial to children, yet it is difficult to keep calm

amidst the bristling of strange toys, and smile when sticky comfits must be handed across to soothe the disorder. Then, there is great looseness in the definition of parcels—a provoking vagueness of distinction between hand-bags and luggage fit for the boot, between a pottle and a hamper,—between nosegays that may be held, actual bunches of vegetables, and plants positively growing in pots. Also it might be reasonable to complain of the hidden fragility of band-boxes behind one's heels, and the obtruded solidity of culinary utensils before one's toes. But if the licence touches an extreme, seldom is there wanting a sufficient quorum of grave "basketeers" for its repression.

Improper or thoroughly ineligible people rarely intrude into the basket. The case has occurred of a person of the humbler grades, mainly subsisting on his property in bathing-machines, whose state of health disposed him to prefer the basket on any winter errand to or from A——. He chanced to wear in general an old-fashioned waterproof greatcoat, and was otherwise inoffensive—of deferential manner, quiet to the last degree ; but the result was his being obliged to take the train on all similar occasions. There was, moreover, an industrious jobbing-gardener not long ago in our watering-place, for whose absence last summer no other reason has yet been alleged than his rash procedure one snowy day in taking a seat by this compartment. It was said he professed to be labouring under a severe cold, and seemed to expect or wish the glass of the end-window kept up,—a thing seldom done, unless required by ladies. Failing this, it is understood that he sat gloomily sucking some coarse-flavoured specific all the way. It is even alleged that he must have come straight from work among damp leek-beds, if not carrying them at the very time to town.

Amongst the top-passengers, there is one whose company within would outweigh all our advantages. A brisk, though heavy man, with a large purple face, which luckily seems to need air ; his clothes usually of the same hard-wearing colour, though with crape on his hat ; and an evident vulgar enjoyment of the freedom, the motion, and the company, as may be heard, when not seen, by the dangling of his wrinkled boots over an end-ladder to a kind of tune with the horses. He generally goes up at a bound, whistling. His hands make a chink in his pockets. He nods to the driver ; the clerk at the office knows him ; the porters incline to touch their hats ; and at any pause in our course he may be heard offering such bets, such bids for a horse, a dog, a chaise, or a cart, that it is plain no economical considerations sway him. This leads us to hope that should any whim prompt him to ride inside, he will inflict himself on the front compartment. Rumour asserts that he is a successful broker of some sort, in connection with our numerous furniture sales and house-fittings in Z—— ; where he has, it seems, built new shops, and laid out ground for the construction of a marine villa to his own taste, with baths, fountain, and pleasure-garden in an Oriental style ; and is, according to our many gossips, a widower on the look-out for a fresh mistress to

his household and mother to his family. Trivial to the chance of his companionship in the basket, is the liability to be favoured, of hot mornings, with the presence of an effervescent young bather or two returning to business in the city ; a couple of lawyers' clerks, or a trio of students, who, it might be supposed, are wont respectively to move about in these numerical proportions. By way of rare variety, the basket has been found the *pis-aller* of an indubitable first-class traveller. I have one in my memory now—one who was hurried up in an over-driven cab from the railway station, where the mail-train had been missed. His servant and his gun-cases and other appurtenances went scrambling up—even a brace of pointers were hoisted somewhere ; but no room remained for him in front ; and he was lodged just within our precincts. He was a most gentlemanly person, with long legs, which did not, however, give the least trouble, almost leaving room for an extra fare. None of our peculiarities seemed to attract his notice ; he appeared unconscious of any voice or feature among us ; indeed, it became evident that he saw only with one eye, and that not without the help of a glass.

Let it not be conceived, however, that no incidents more exciting ever thrill our jog-trot course ; the truth is, there are special contingencies of a nature to mark out the basket in this view. Late of an evening, past the check-box at the turnpike, the drivers *will* exercise a power to take up stray wayside fares, whether pleading or peremptory, who are strangely apt to be huddled into the convenient back. If a traveller of any class, sex, or age seem likely to require care in transmission, the usual drift of all parties is to devolve it on our end of the coach. Too often have symptoms appeared, ere the end, of a condition on the part of the individual so tenderly entrusted, such as may best be denoted by the admission that I have not myself known it reach the pitch of fury, or exactly resemble medical accounts of *delirium tremens*. However, it is not long ago since there was "booked" one night in the office, along with our respectable little company to Z——, an excessively quiet tradesman-like person, accompanied by his much too solicitous wife, whose youth, rosy cheeks, and shrewd prominence in the transaction went far to cover it. Apparently it was fatigue that settled him at once in the furthest corner, where, screened by her, he fell asleep. But, no sooner were we clear of the shop-lights and well upon the road, than he woke up,—most dreadfully woke up. Our solitary lamp from overhead disclosed that the wretch was, beyond all doubt, tipsy ! Save for the wife's strenuous exertions, her endearments joined to her authority,—(though her previous conduct had been abominably sly,) there is no saying what might have followed. As it was, the fearful creature vehemently endeavoured to convince us that it was his wife who, of the two, was intoxicated. He proceeded to sing to us a medley of songs, the most Bacchanalian in character, in the choruses of which we were expected to join ; he cast defiant frowns upon our only protector, poor old Monsieur B——, a French master in town, who, without

any effect whatever, gave the fellow his card. We all jointly had to restrain them by main force from a personal struggle ; the worst result at the close being a sudden determination, on the part of the flattered monster, that he must see us home. Whether he meant it jointly or severally, is impossible to say ; but he was happily diverted from his purpose by his shrewd helpmate.

It has ever been maintained that these uncouth chances impart a zest to coach travelling, bring out a variety of character and shorten the way by a stir to the thoughts, which are all unavailable within the same limits to other modes of conveyance. I myself incline to that view—when the adventure is over.

It was on a hot and glaring forenoon at Z——'s liveliest season, on a market-day, with front and top both full, a single vacancy alone remaining in the basket, that I once sat in it prepared to start for town, but conscious that in doing so I traversed the teachings of experience. Under such a combination of circumstances, to go by coach in that direction is a sort of tempting of fortune ; however, the more than usual selectness of four fellow-passengers, previously installed, had lured me into breaking a rule which should rather have been enforced by consideration. Overflowed by the demand for seats, our interior had never before, probably, worn an aspect so resembling that of the more *recherché* section in front. On either side the door, politely ready to give way on due occasion, yet planted in evident determination against admitting aught unsuitable, sat a gentleman apparently equal to the most trying juncture ; the one, a stout commercial dignitary from the seaport, generally understood to be a consul ; the other a younger personage, unknown, but even more undoubtedly, by figure, demeanour, and accent, belonging to the upper grades of life. A widowed matron opposite me had the air of "position" still less questionable ; while in the corner beyond her sat a finely-dressed young lady, of travelled "accomplishments," corresponding ease of manner, and English birth, all apparent by the style in which she had seized the occasion to converse with her neighbour, and I at once frankly included myself in the *tête-à-tête*. Already they had caught the presentiment of evil which seized me at the appearance from the office of a prompt and strident figure—a market-bound woman—a female with a heap of limp veil thrown up over an obsolete bonnet, her draperies perpendicular, her form bony and tall, lips thin, nose self-asserting, and in her grasp a neutral-tinted umbrella with a hooked head. Was it positively conceivable that *she* !—but the sentence failed at her dire advent, *malaise* in her train. Blocking up the door-way with an authoritative air, before which the "boy" dwindled, she paused in seeming civility to ask, "Will ye sit yont, air, if ye please?" It was to the loftier of our immovable cavaliers that she addressed herself.

"Hm—ahem, I—a—a," and a nonplussed glance of appeal to our judgment was cast inward—"Really, I prefer the door, my good woman," he said, as, without yielding the point, he stood up to let her pass.

She pressed flouncing in to her rightful place, which was at my side. "I ne'er saw sic a disobleegin' uncevil set a' my days!" remarked she; adding, while still erect, with a long arm outstretched, "Here, Johnny, my man, hand us up the bit burden."

Straightway a perspiring lad, who had been hidden in her rear, thrust recklessly in over the consul's knees a bulky mass, out of all question inadmissible; but it came too late for protest or for appeal to the coach-office. The door closed with a bang, and we were rolling off to town. The "bit burden" was in form a basket, in bulk and evident weight more like a hamper, in fulness of annoyance as bad as the box of Pandora.

"Why, ma'am," exclaimed the haughtier of our champions, "you are surely not going to keep that basket in *here*!" "'Deed am I, an' what for no'?" was the answer, as she settled the huge structure on her lap. "I hae paid my money as weel as *you*, an' if ye had but sitten up a bit as I askit ye, there wad hae been less fash to get settled! I'm no' just as lang-leggit though that I'll tak' up ither folk's room, like some!"

It was plain she could be more disagreeable still, if meddled with; the worthy consul inclined to turn the subject, and by some jocose remark drew off the other into what might be called a state of armed truce. We at the inner end had the worst of it, though chiefly as yet in a mere bodily way, from the trenching on our legitimate space. Worse than mere contact with that odious piece of luggage, was the sense of a sour, silent notice under which none of us passed scathless. A slight instinctive movement of my own was first to draw it out, in the grimly-apologetic allusion to "folk's skirts now-a-days, that couldna be keepit clear o'"; with a muttered supplement, referring to "thae menseless blauds o' what they ca' creenylin'" as extended "past bounds o' patience, no' to speak o' station!" The manner was that of some inhabitant of Z——, arguing from a local knowledge which it might be unsafe to despise. Unpleasantest of all became the woman's sudden attention to the voice of our sprightly young companion in the corner, who professed herself an entire stranger to our town till that very morning. She was comparatively at her ease, in fact, diverting us by lively accounts of continental spas and watering-places quite unlike our own; while a most unfriendly recollection of some sort was indicated beyond doubt, in every glance from the twisted-up and vixenish features of our nuisance. Meantime our late advocate by the door was again the sufferer. He happened to move his feet, when the foe all at once peered down in manifest detection of some weak point.

"Ehey!" was her uncouth exclamation, "baasket, said you! My certy! I think I had full as much richt to fetch in my bit handiskep, as ye had to bring in *yeer dug*!" By what gift of nature she ferreted out the truth, remains dubious; but dog it was,—small, to be sure, and of harmless look,—crouched somewhere under the owner's seat.

"Dog?—ah, true!" its master confessed, a good deal embarrassed. "Well, but my dog, ma'am, a mere toy-terrier, was in nobody's—"

"Has't a mizzle on? No—naething o' the sort!" emphatically

retorted the overwhelming woman, with an air of alarm which added to the inconvenience behind: "Oo, it's big enough to bite, at any rate, thae warm days. Didna ye see the pollis-notishes, that it's a heavy fine? But it's well to be seen, I trow, how ye didna seek a front place!"

There was altogether a vanquished effect on our luckless defender, only to be covered by the necessity of checking the little animal's irritation at her behaviour.

It now began to appear that the foe's outrageous package was made up of commodities unusually disagreeable in a limited space, but we were aided to sustain the vexation by our vivacious neighbour on the other side, where, it was true, she could better afford to make herself pleasant. She had dashed into an animated sketch of some days recently spent at Dunkirk, with its antique etiquettes and rococo tastes, as she described them; never in the least observing the pointed repugnance of those glances from our bugbear, whose visage and demeanour did not seem to have recalled the slightest association to her memory. About this English girl herself there was, it must be owned, considerable singularity. These extensive tours were remarkable at her age, for one who referred in no way to any particular company that had shared them; her extreme frankness was singular, at least in our cautious climate; and then there was the irresistible impression, even allowing for choice in the colours of dress and display of jewellery, that she was not a lady, nor a lady's maid, nor of the governess order between. Remarkable, too, was the effect of one main feature in a face which would otherwise have been exceedingly pretty. This was a much too conspicuous aquiline nose, not to be relieved—or rather, to use the artistic phrase, thrown back from relief—by abundant ringlets, with the help of very expressive eyes.

Presently the precise nature of the nuisance in the hamper was infallibly identified, with a sudden fixed disgust. Stopping short amidst her graphic account of Dunkirk, the girl fairly seized her offended nose with her handkerchief, and gave stifled vent to the ejaculation—"Oh, what a lot of herrings!" Darting a look at the obvious cause, "Oh, if there's one thing I abominate more than another," she added, "I declare it's herrings!" Then turning straight to the culprit, who as yet only gloomed a speechless defiance, she recklessly put the preposterous inquiry, "I say, ma'am, have you got any herrings in your basket?"

Ridiculous above exaggeration as it all was, the kindled wrath of the grim housewife put aught like mirth to flight thenceforth.

"What's that ye say? Hae I gotten *what*, quo' she! *Nae rings* was 't? Will it be mair o' thae fine French gewgaws, think ye, sir?" addressing her first disdainful appeal to the consul. "But there's nae hawkers here, I fancy,—though maybe folk's fingers would whiles be a' the better o' a bit gude plain ring, if it was but to show, ye ken, mem——"

She was set right, however, with somewhat of a malicious relish, by the owner of the terrier, who repeated the terms of the question too distinctly for mistake.

"Ou, it's like *you'll* be better used, sir, nae doubt," snapped she, "at unnerstannin' siccan wanderin' ladies! Hairrins, was 't? Aye"—and she turned, more confidentially than I liked, to me, "I needna speer whatten-like mainners it is, miss, to sit snuff-snuffin' at ony decent person's gear in a public conveyance, far less askin' sic brazen-faced quest'ns! But, at ony rate, it's no' just the sort o' company that might be expeckit to see keep't by ane o' the faim'ly frae Seaforth Cottage"—she was here severely referring to my own place of abode—"no' to say, hab-nabbin' wi', sae crouselly! It makes a heap o' difference, ye ken, miss," pursued she, with a deferential indication toward the lady opposite, "when a person changes their condition in life, let-a-be worldly station. But for my pairt, I need naeboddy betwixt me an' their harlagan tricks or their over-sca gibberish, I'se warrant! Hairrins, was 't—an' I wad like to ken——"

Our matron in crape here gently interposed. "You are, surely," said she, in a propitiating way, "Mrs. White from the sea-baths—whom I ought, I think, to have——"

"Beggin' your pardon, mem—no," was the emphatic correction. "Miss Linkater, number five round the corner frae your ain lodge-gates. The Cornel kent me fine, worthy man, but *he* aye minded an acquaintance. It's nane o' their flats or their furnished apartments, but a gude main-door house, every way well fitted up, though I say 't—wi' a verandy to the paraud', an' new venaishan blinds, an' a comfortable gairden for-bye——"

At this attractive description our young traveller looked round; she had certainly seen the place, as she informed me aside, having, in fact, gone down that morning to Z—— with a view to seaside quarters. "We found none exactly suitable," she said, "though at this one the ticket mentioned a garden, which tempted Edward to inquire, while we idled about the beach—he was quite entrapped into going in, positively forced to look through a whole lot of little rooms full of people's things, and could absolutely scarce escape——"

"——Lone woman if I be," was pursuing the irate basket-bearer, with a settled gripe of her charge, "an' more reduced in circumstances than formerly, Mistress Cornel—was I to be insultit wi' mean-like quest'ns about wham I keep't in my pickle quiet hens, or how I cookit my bit meals o' meat, an' whatten pairt o' my house I had to mysel'—an' noo, set them up, it's hairrins, is 't! Out upon siccan pantymine speeches, say I!"

"Edward could scarce escape," our luckless companion was whispering, "from a sort of ogre, as he described it, who seemed in charge of the poultry, but turned out to be the proprietor or the tenant or something, hovering from the back-yard, with an eye upon the garden, and seeming to live mysteriously about the—— Really, I do assure you, ma'am," said she, aloud, at the further proof of injury, "if you've felt offended, 'twas unintentional; and, as for the lodgings, we——"

"A when wauf characters, mem, wi' hairy lips," rose the shrill assault that matched all noises of the thoroughfare outside, "gaun round the toun pittin' sic queries to honest folk—naething but a pretence, maybe to pick up the spunes—aye, let them look down off the coach-tap if they like! Mair fittin' them to hire the toun-hall, trailin' a dressed-up miss after them, to geck and nicker outside on the sands, like——"

"Pray, pray, my good worthy creature," entreated the colonel's widow, though much more hopefully sharing our glances through the windows, as the Post-office and Queen's Theatre were passed, "do, at least, I beg of you, be calm until——"

"Oh, aye, mem," she went on, dropping part of her gall on the arbiter; it's true I hae been ower long used wi' slights an' scoffs, no' to ken how to conduct myself—an' what's mair, I hope it's no for naething that I attend regular wi' a spiritual-minded congregation on Doctor Black, in Pier Street, godly man! It's nane o' their half-thay'ters, wi' an organ, to blind folks' principles to what's proper company. Nor I'm no an offisher frae the army, to come out o't and rap out the oaths I hae heard on less occasion. I canna just shift to a grand cottage i' the country, like some, when I tak' doun my bit ticket—keepin' a bloatit-like impiddent gairdner about the place, as they maybe can afford wi' a rent ta'en out o' poorer folk's mouths; but I wad like to hear——"

"There, at any rate, is the coach-office at last!" said the consul, joyfully: the gentleman with the terrier was already on his feet, and gallantly stood, when he reached the pavement, to assist the fair widow out beyond danger.

"Awa' wi' siccan play-actin' gesters an' speeches frae the heathen crew yonder!" still raved the termagant, filling up the way as she hoisted her cargo. "But it's ae advantage o' warid-knowledge by the house-letting business, that they're ower kenspeckle to mistak'. My troth! Catch me offerin' to put mysel' up about the coal-house, wi' a when servants o' Baal playin' cairds on my drawin'-room table, an' my new venaishan pu'd up like their ain thay'ter scroll, by a Jezebel tragicky-queen!"

"Thank my stars!" exclaimed the English girl, adjusting her ringlets ere we cautiously followed, "she's gone. Really, though, my dear, she flattered my abilities in that last hit, evidently mistaking us for some of the theatrical company here—and an excellent company it is. As for that dreadful basket, goodness be praised it was not damaged—I don't think it has oozed upon any of us after all." But at the door were two passengers from the top, or, I rather think, three—perhaps even so many as four—who evidently stood to receive her; one approaching to hand her out, when she had begun to tell me, "I think we shall try Dispe for the remainder of the season, and if ever you should happen—— Ah, Edward," she broke off, "have I kept you waiting? Good-by, then!" and she nodded to me pleasantly; then, with unabated sprightliness, tripped out.

Outside the throng, past the office door, as I turned to the streets, was

the woman with the basket ; resting it on a curbstone for the moment, she stood following with sidelong gaze the group of travellers, and said in a general way, "Hairrina, was't? Aha! an' if it was e'en the fare that a respectable person had whyles to even theirsel's wi'—it's been kent when some folk cam' to be geyan glad, aye, an' fain, o' a gude hairrin', be't fresh, saut, or red, an' couldna win till't—no' to speak after o' the drap o' cauld water to cool their tongue! An' if *I* had speered what was in yon braw French-lookin' reddycle o' hers," she concluded, taking up her load, "wha kens but it was a heap waur nor hairrins? Fau'se faces for a dishguise, maybe, or as likely cheens to drap i' the park, if no' a pea an' thium'les! Set her up, wi' her an' her hawk-nebbit."

Further invective the concourse of business swept from hearing, unless to the knot of lounging street-porters and approving boys. All I had seen of the strangers was their rather gentlemanly air, healthy English complexions, and faces certainly much too hirsute for dramatic use ; as to the dark innuendoes of so prejudiced a censor, these deserve no weight. Nevertheless, the vivacious manner and attractive expression of the girl herself, all the more vivid for that one exaggerated feature, continued to return on thought with a curious interest in her destinies. I never afterwards beheld any of the party ; but it seemed a coincidence of some apparent point at first sight, when torn handbills struck the eye here and there, referring to late performances of a fashionable Italian conjuror or modern wizard, who had visited the city, his exhibitions being varied by the piano-playing of an accomplished daughter, whose assistance in sundry feats also added to the zest of the entertainment. Soon, on the other hand, newspaper advertisements tended to lead fancy in a different track ; for the private séances of a party of American spiritualists were announced, at some of which, from subsequent reports, a lady of special mesmeric susceptibility demonstrated her gift to a most impressive degree. In neither case did circumstances allow proof of the conjecture ; yet it was vaguely left to force the belief, that on this occasion our basket either carried a distinguished wizardess, or even conveyed the person of a wondrous medium.

More agreeable to remember is another incident of the coaches, happily exemplifying better the characteristics of their most social division. One bleak day before last Christmas, I had made the journey by rail to town ; finding it, of course, as dull as the weather. But in the starry evening I turned to the accustomed coach-office, and was stepping from it to enter the late coach for Z——, when a porter followed me to put the odd question, whether my name was "Ram- age?" At a reply in the negative, he went off, saying, "Because I've got a jar for her." To each of three other basket passengers who succeeded, he addressed the same inquiry, receiving the same answer, more than once somewhat testily ; in every case making the same explanation, in his dull uninflected voice and stolid manner : all of which had a sufficiently monotonous effect in the frosty outer air. Our number was

quickly made up by an addition which in ordinary circumstances is rather cheery than otherwise ; that of a dragoon and his wife, the one being trim, tall, and stalwart, with good-humour appropriate to his bulk, the other tidy, alert, and sharp, though comparatively dumpy. Scarce had they got seated, when there appeared at our door the head of the man in search of an owner for his parcel, and for the fifth time the question was put, "Is your name Ramage?"

"No," said the soldier, with his prompt civility; "my name ain't—it's Joe Mortimer; if that will suit your purpose."

Again the reason was given, before withdrawing into the shadows,—
"Because I've got a jar for her."

Obscurely we saw him intercepting those who sought the top, and besieging the very front-section, on his tiresome quest; till the hapless article really acquired an interest above jars in ordinary. When the soldier and his wife had got their own little parcels adjusted to their mind, an idea seemed to flash upon the latter as she looked about her: "I say, though, Joe," she said, "I shouldn't wonder if that 'ere jar is for Mrs. Ram-mage, w'at lives over the way from us. I know she meant bein' in town; as her son is expected."

"Oh, in that case," said he, "we'd better take charge of it,—she mayn't have been able to reach in time, and can't like just to carry it, this cold night." Accordingly he tapped on a window, and the porter readily answered the summons. "I say, my good fellow, my niissus, here, she thinks that 'ere jar must be for a neighbour of the name who keeps a little 'baccy-shop opposite the barracks. If so, just hand it here, and we'll deliver it safe enough." The man's troubles were at an end so far; in the office they would have nothing to do with it, he said, and it was not very pleasant hanging about in the cold; nevertheless, the truth was, it could not be handed in, being too large for that. "Very well, then, just get it hitched up atop," said the dragoon; "no fear but we'll have an eye to it,—so you may be off home as soon as you please." As he went off, every one settled for starting; it was thought we had seen the last of him, at all events when he had returned for a moment to say it would be found at the right-hand corner, next the driver's box.

Gruff old Mason the coachman, whip in hand, came round to count his passengers, standing upon the steps to do so; behind him once more was the man, coaxing him for some favour. This still concerned the jar, and as Mason folded up his list, his crusty temper broke down in regard to it—"To Fife wi' you an' your Ramages an' yer jaur's, ye've fairly deaved me deaf wi' them! Shut-to the door, laddie,—all full inside, an' nine on the tap. At'noe for a' I tell ye, man, heave't up yersel', or let it bide—it's bewitched, I think—I dinna believe onybody'll hae't! No' anither word noo— a' richt!"

He stumped off to mount his box; the dragoon calling out to the porter that he thought it had been put up long ago, while the latter rushed to make some last confidential statement in his ear. As the wheels

grated off behind our trampling team, he seemed vainly attempting to toss his charge upon the roof, and was left forlorn under a lamp, beating his frosted hands athwart each other.

: The natural idea was that we had left the ill-fated article behind us. But boys will do for soldiers what they will not for ordinary people, and the conductor's perch had served to lodge more than its due. "I wasn't going to see a neighbour left in the lurch," said the dragoon.

"And very neighbourly she is, is Mrs. Ram-mage," his wife explained, "though she do live over the way, and rather a odd name to pronounce—which of course, ma'am, that's 'ow we were sure of it."

"Yes, I don't think there's another such name," agreed he, "even hereaway, where I should say there's a lot of odd ones.

"Most people arn't 'arf so friendly hereabouts," was her cordial encomium on the owner; "more particularly in regard of clothes-lines or a washing-tub, and that—which you can't always be expected to carry."

Unfortunately for the subject of their praises, however, our boy felt much incommoded by the jar; long ere we reached the turnpike, he was shifting from one foot to the other, and at length said—"It's ower heavy, sodger,—let alane the cauldness o't, and there's a fare to get out at Cockhillside—it'll either hae to gang on the tap or be droppit.

From this alternative he was saved by the stoppage he had mentioned, which relieved us of one companion, allowing the object of their care to be taken in at the door. There, by our glimmer from the roof, it looked between the dragoon's knees a shapeless bulk indeed, somewhat like one's fancy of the jars lodged with Ali Baba.

"Why, Mary Ann," exclaimed her husband, feeling it carefully, "it ain't a jar after all—it's a basket."

"A basket? Nonsense, Joe," she said, "the man told you a jar—quite distinct! I hope it ain't a trick upon us?" Turning a frightened face in our direction, "They do sometimes put babies in baskets and leave 'em on people—and whatever should we do, if it was! Why, I've got four of my own, ma'am, at home!"

It proved to be neither a mere jar, nor simply a basket, but one of those compounds of both, well known under the name of "greybeard," which are devoted to the conveyance of usquebaugh or aqua-vitæ.

"O Joe," cried the dragoon's wife, almost as scared at this discovery as at her previous thoughts, "this can't be for Mrs. Rammage—whatever could she do with an 'ole 'ogged of whisky?"

"'Tain't a 'ogshead, missus, don't ye see—it's only a greybeard," reasoned he, with a positiveness enforced by some uncomfortable feeling; "and if her son is expected to-morrow, as you said,—why, mayn't she mean to have a little company?"

"Well, if she do," was the answer, "she's as sly as sly! I always did say; for a Scotchwoman, Mrs. Ram-mage was not close of her affairs—and more especially when I gave her, no longer ago than yesterday, that nice dyed ribbon she admired."

But our pulling-up at the turnpike brought a pause to her dis-closures, while the old checkman came with his lantern to tick off the fares; and it were vain to guess what more might have been said of a neighbour hitherto so esteemed had the matter not been settled by a voice at hand.

"Is there no' a greybeard in the boot for us?" it hoarsely asked: "the mistress was to bring 't down wi' her, but she didna win up to town. It'll be direckit Tammas Ramage, down the loan here."

From among a cluster of houses down the cross-road there projected a tavern with illuminated door and casement, to which the claimant pointed; a place doubtless frequented from the neighbouring barracks, but with a sign which had been altered and newly painted, as appeared the next day I passed it. Honest Joe Mortimer's ignorance had therefore been by no means strange, but during the brief remainder of his journey in our company, his feelings seemed to turn upon this point. "Hang it, then, missus!" he muttered, striking a hand on his thigh after delivery of the well-tended freight, "to think all the while there was another of the name! I'd have sworn there wa'n't—no, not in the shire, much less at our very corner. It's an odd country for names, I must say. For all one knows, sir, why—for all one sees—it may be full of Ramages!" His predominating emotion was manifestly one of disappointment.

"I'm glad, though, if you'll believe me, ma'am," said the wife, as the coach stopped for them, "it ain't for *our* Mrs. Ram-age after all!"

They were scarcely out, when once more a notion struck the good trooper, giving a clearness to his voice at departure: "But what if it's this son of hers, you know, that's come and took the old King's Head? Tain't a common name, is Ramage! Is his name Thomas, d'ye know? If so, by George——"

And with a cheery laugh from her in reply, they were lost in the Christmas night, amidst lively sounds of the bugle, and the changing guard. For my own part, it was pleasant to believe the neighbourly bonds were not any way broken by that jar, and that, at the expected arrival of Ramage, junior, the Mortimers really would aid to celebrate it; receiving instead of some half-grudged admission through circuitous means to an impromptu drinking-bout, the spontaneous invitation beforehand to a snug cup of tea over the way.

Into such queer little *tableaux*—noway changed by narration, save that half the oddity is lost—will actual life in our grave Northern region be occasionally thrown, when borne along by our "basket." A different interest marks the last sample to be given; for while it is the latest of all, so that the very words are here set down, there was a simple force of nature about it, touching beyond ordinary. After an absence of some duration from home at Z——, and from those errands to old A——, I once more reached the city by a long railway journey; only in proper time for an afternoon coach to the seaside town. Seated again in my favourite nook of the good old compartment, which really seemed luxurious

after leagues of steam travelling, I waited patiently for the signal from the clock on the well-known steeple; my only fellow-passenger till then being a quiet middle-aged lady, evidently accustomed to the place. In suitable style, we were congratulating ourselves on having it all between us, for the day had been wet, the roads were bad: though on what else the conversation was to turn, during the three miles to Z——, remained signally doubtful. At the last moment, the door was opened for an accession to our number, in the shape of an elderly little woman, with her gown tucked high around, the skirt over her arm, and some degree of stiffness in mounting the step. She required additional help from the juvenile conductor within, ere her ruffled garb was smoothed and her breath gained; but we were then rewarded out of a store of speech that must have been exhaustless. The neatest, pleasantest-eyed, liveliest-dimpled, most apple-cheeked of well-to-do little dames, with a mourning dress that set her off as if for church, she turned to us a face just of the sort to befit the basket; and she talked—a thing rare in the vernacular idiom of the North—as freely as a brook runs, as fearlessly, with similar unhesitating abundance and winning ease. From her protest against the high steps of the coaches, her complaint of the weather, and acknowledgment of rheumatics, we were carried through the mistake about a money-order at the post-office—which had flustered her enough in itself—to the cause of her being obliged to go down to Z—— in person, instead of making a letter serve the turn. We became informed that her youngest son, John, was in an excellent situation there, but proposed to begin business on his own account; wherefore she meant to lend him the money in question, which was her own. Straightway were we made aware that his father, her own good-man, was well able to have done it, but of late had inclined to be “hard;” though he “kent fine that he must slacken his purse-strings in the end, when *she* thought fit to say the word.” With much more by the way did she acquaint us, in a manner impossible to feel tedious, had my mild spinster companion been the primmest of old maids: among other things it seemed that the good-man, however niggardly disposed in general, was even “overly prideful” about her dressing well when she left home; more especially if, as on the present occasion, she designed to visit any of her good-daughters. Of these connections—the wives, namely, of sons—the worthy couple had several, all well settled in good substantial houses, though at some distance, as was to be expected when young men had to push their way in the world; and she hinted confidentially, that the truth was, there might soon be another in the same case. Now being started on the road so far, notwithstanding the weather and the good-man’s crotchets about fitting dress for such calls, a notion had just struck her to go on the length of X—— harbour, where one daughter-in-law was established; perhaps the best-settled of them all, with the most right to be particular about things, seeing that Andrew was in the Custom-house, holding a very responsible station. She scouted the thought of Phemie being otherwise than pleased to see her in any case, and fain to show her

their new house, or the bairns anything but glad at the surprise ; but the cheery little body indulged only a half-remorseful glee in thus stealing a march on the old man, although it were to prove he stood too much on ceremony with daughters-in-law. Her good-daughters appeared to be a favoured theme ; they were each as kindly as if she had found them out for herself ; they took trouble about her, though they had cost her none ; they were as dear to her, in fact, and her husband's ceremony on the matter was evidently strange to her mind.

"I suppose," said the quiet middle-aged lady beside me, perhaps without much thought on the question, "you have no daughters of your own ?"

"No,—no, mem," said she quickly. It seemed to me she had winced at the idea ; but the lively little woman was of a temper to dwell on no wants or regrets, and she rushed on again in new discourse, still bearing upon her main topic.

Presently the coach stopped to let down some passenger near the great cavalry barracks, half way to Z——, and we were in sight of their open main-gate. The quaint little old body sat with her back that way, but, glancing half round, she ceased in the midst of her talk ; its thread snapped at the moment, and she looked to us again rather vacantly. It struck me afterwards that, as we passed on, she had started at the martial sounds issuing from the parade square—of a measured tramp of men at foot-drill, the prancing of horses, and a sudden trumpet-call. While we rolled on, "Ye were sayin' something to me, mem ?" she inquired at the more watchful of her hearers ; "or may be it would be me that was throng wi' some o' my haverin' stories ? But I whyles need to be keep't back to the mark in my clavers."

"It seems you have been a traveller," answered I, to lead off at random from the disturbing thoughts first caused, evidently, by a meddling touch. "You have been in *London* !" I said, laying stress on the word.

"Hoots aye, that hae I, mem," was the self-complacent reply, with something of the previous heartiness ; "though ye might weel hao wondered, leddies, at an auld body like me flaunting about to a' the sights I was ta'en to see, the first time I was there, like as I had been a ——" But again the tone sank, as she added, mournfully, "I was *twice* there, mem. Ye may hardly believe it—but it was when I was visitin' my puir daughter Jane."

All the light had passed out of her quick eye, and the colour faded from her complexion, showing lines of past troubles ; yet she looked steadily out from it. We felt constrained to ask, almost in a whisper, "Is she dead—your daughter is dead ?"

Instead of answering our question, she said, "Although it's no' a thing that I'll bide to have pried into, no, nor steered up by some folks' spite,—there's nae shame in the whole o't,—nane whatever. It gies me vent to speak o't whyles, in fit hearing. Would ye like to hear about her ? for if ye would, I maun begin at the very beginning :—"

"My daughter Jane was a beautiful girl,—I'm her mother, and maybe I shouldna say it; but I am no' one to close my eyes against my bairn's faults, an' as for the rest of them, though they are a' gude and well doing, I must say they are no' extraordinar' bonny. But Jane was our only daughter, as bonny a lassie as ye need wish to see. She was a wee, smally bit thing, no doubt, but spirity frae the first. Her father used to say she took some of her good looks fra me, but it was just his daffing o' auld times, for naebody else e'er backed his words; though in my day I wasna that ill to see.

"Awell, she had a good edication given her, as they a' had, for the good-man said, 'Edicate them weel, and then they'll be able to push their ain way.' He's a well-edicated man himsel', so ye ken I didna interfere. Then when she was done wi' her schoolin', I sent her to learn the dress-making and manty-making; for I thought she would make a real neat lady's-maid, maybe to gang abroad and see the world; though her father was wild at me for thinking such a thing, for ye ken Jane was his favourite; he thought naebody was sae bonny as her, an' oh he was proud o' her—proud at the kirk, proud when we took a walk, nae less proud at his ain board-end, or if she chanced to be in the shop when folk cam' in, and it was askit who she was after she slipt out o' their sight. Awell, when she wasna seventeen year auld, she was invited to a pairty. Oh, they're bad things, thae pairtics,—never let bairns gang to pairties—No, it wasna a ball, it was a pairty at a decent friend's house, a tanner that we knew, an elder in our kirk, no less, but his house was near the Queen's Park. Before that day, Jane was a quiet lassie for a' her looks; likin' to bide in the house wi' her work, or her book, for a great reader she was forbye: but after that night, everything o' the kind went wrang wi' her. At the pairty, she had met wi' a sodger—no' a common sodger, mind, but a sergeant, and ane o' the cavalry, a regiment o' the best-famed an' the bravest o' them—and frae the moment she set eyes on him, her head was turned. He was no less fain and fond about her too, and he saw her hame to the door, though we didna know it, and they bude to meet again, and a' that sort o' thing passed between them. A' the while, too, there was a most respectable young man, son to a grocer of our acquaintance, that had just doted upon Jane, and when they used to practise thegither in the singing-class o' thar congregation, she had gi'en him some encouragement, I doubtna; so what did he do on the head o't, but he was off to America, and had made a hantle o' money through the troubles there, and he wrote home, puir lad, that he was coming back to marry her. We liked him real well oursel's, and if it hadna been for the sodger, so did she, I verily believe, and would have ta'en him. However, some time passed, till I found out who she was keepin' company wi', and I put it to her. She never denied it, but straight out an' asked leave for him to come to the house. I argued a long time to her, tel't her how angry her father would be, an' a' that, but she wouldna listen; so I thought it would be far better for her to meet him at her ain fireside, than gaun stragvaging through the

streets. Accordingly he cam', the sergeant cam'—for she woulna hear him ca'd a sodger—a fine muckle tall handsome-looking chiel' he was, I must say, and a grand talker. He had been to India, and to Ireland, and where not—and he could describe about everything ye wanted to ken; though whyles, when he was vaunting about the army and so on, I tel't him that sodgers were little better than big targets, dressed up in scarlet or blue, an' set upon a horse's back to jingle till they were knockit ower. He didna like it much, but he was eyan good-tempered, and he used aye to answer that the enemy were just the same. Then I would say back to him, 'Oh, we've naething ado wi' the enemy—it's *you* I'm speakin' to, an' at ony rate the enemy doesna want to take awa' my silly bit lassie there!' That was the way I keep't girdin' at him, in hopes to drive him off; no' forgettin' at a time, to make mention o' the young grocer, an' his success in life. But I couldna look at Jane's face without seein' how the case stood, an' some way or other they managed to make theirsel's happy, in fact she said the sergeant likit me particular well. The warst o't was, that her father being throng wit' his business at the time, and no' in till late in the evenin', he saw but little o't, and thocht less. Wae am I to say this day, that I let the truth be blinkit frae him, for I was aye hopin' to hear o' the regiment bein' shifted.

"In fac', at last the orders cam', as I didna fail to hear; the dragoons had to be off to Aldersholt, and glad was I to see his back turned. I did a' I could to separate them then; I keepit up the letters he wrote to her, and some she wrote to him, but it was found out, and they were addressed, or they were posted, other ways. I spoke to her, I'm sure my tongue was never off her; but she would not listen. Word cam' to me quietly, too, how young Sandy Stewart was arrived in Liverpool, and was settlin' his affairs to come hame in a week's time, wi' some grand ower-sea presents for his mother an' our Jane; and I said naething o't, thinkin' to tak' her by surprise. But that was less use than a', in fac' it wrought things to a head. How the sergeant got wind o't, I canna tell; but no' a day or twa before young Stewart wun hame, back comes my gentleman, and that very night Jane told me that he wanted her to marry him. I tell'd her, her father would never gi'e his consent, nor e'er forgi'e her if she did it anyway underhand; and this she kent very weel hersel'. She begged me to speak to him, but I woulndna meddle in it. 'Mother,' she says, and she clasped her twa hands thegither, '*I must* hae him.' 'Awel, Jane, my woman,' I says, 'you'll rue it once, but that'll be a' your life. Ye'll break your father's heart, and bring his grey hairs with sorrow to the grave.' That night she went out, and cam' back again about ten o'clock lookin' awfu' flushed and feverish, but she said naething mair, till the next morning she telled me that they had gone before a justice o' the peace, an' had got married.

"Oh, her father was an angry man that day, but I got him spoken ower at last. 'John,' I says, 'since the deed is done, it canna be helpit; the best thing now to do is to get the minister and ha'e them married

properly. It'll never do to let the neebors see she has done that without your leave; besides, ye ken, he can claim her by the law at any moment.' That frightened him to the extent, that at last, after a sore reissale, he g'i'ed in, provided a' should be done duly and in order, according to the fear of God, and the sergeant bude to sign an agreement beforehand—being of the prelatical persuasion himsel'—if there was any family, to allow their upbringing under pure Presbyterian ordinances, and the shorter catechism was to be learned them. It would ha'e made the dourest heart was to see the good-man when he threip't about this before me to the sergeant, like as it laid some ease to his mind, an' couldna be broken through i' the application; but the sergeant made no difficulty about it. Well, they were married—properly and beautifully married—and I sat up till day-break to get finished wi' the silk gown I bought her, a changing-coloured silk it was, and her father gave her a good kist-full, and I gave her routh o' sheets and blankets, hame-spun dapery, spun in my mother's time, no' like the common trash ye buy nowadays.

"Then they went to Newcastle, and a year after, I went there to be wi' her when her first baby was born; he had her two eyes, but ower like the father otherwise for my taste, though a bonny bairn. I visited her in different places, and was aye greatly attended to mysel', for the sergeant and his friends spared no trouble, nor they thought nae sicht or show ower good for me, I must say; though I aye withstood the temptation o' stage-playin', but I needna speak mair against it without experience. Awell, frae London the first time I was there, Jane cam' down wi' me hersel' and her two children, winsome wee things to ha'e by us in the house; and weel micht they draw round the good-man's heart as they did, hearin' them their questions and their bits o' paraphrases wi' his ain ears, till ye would ha'e said he was well-nigh contented about the sergeant. It was when she was with us this way, that the word cam' frae headquarters that the regiment was ordered for the Indies. Oh, she was white to see, puir young thing, when we heard it first. 'Mother,' says she, a' in a moment, 'I must go too—wherever my man goes, there must I and the bairns be.' 'Oh, Jane, Jane,' I said, 'if ye gang, I'll never see you more—something 'll befall ye in that wild country,' I said, for I felt it in me, 'or ye'll die and be bury't in the weary sea—Oh, Jane, stay wi' your mother like a good lassie!' I says to her. Naething I said could daunt her from it; she was bent upon going. Her father was worse against her going than he had been at her marriage; but what could he do? he had to gi'e way at the last, as before.

"Awell, she went awa'y, and a dull dull house ye may believe they left behind them. We had letters from her at last; then after that, another baby was born to her in the Indies, and she wrote word how much she had missed me, for I had been with her at the rest; the fact was, I couldna ha'e left the good-man his 'lane, or else, maybe, I would ha'e ventured ower the sea till her in time. She tel't us no little forbye about the places they were in, both the barracks at Dum-Dum as they

ca'd it, and the fort at Calcutta, wi' the black nurses she had, and servants like gentry at hame, and queer machines to carry them about on men's shoulders, and private quarters o' her own to bide in, for the sergeant got a Staff appointment, and meikle more she wrote to tell us ; but aye her letters cam' ower the words in different pairts o' them, ' Oh, mother, if I could only see you again ! ' Aye, puir lassie, that will never be in this world—for the next letter brought news that my bonny Jane was *dead*."

The while she had been telling this little story, the good woman's voice was firm and distinct, without a quiver in it ; now her clear eye was dimmed, the wrinkles deepened towards it, her lips contracted in pain upon the last bitter word. It was in different tones, like those of some other person, that she added slowly, nodding her head to each epithet : " And the sodger—Jane's man—the sairgeant—the great senseless taurget, as I weel might ca' him—no' nine months after, he was married again. And the bairns, my bonny Jane's three bairns, we dinna ken yet where they are. But we ha'e written to head-quarters, and just only let me hear o' the regiment being in England, an' if I had to traivel the road on fit, I'll gang to him and march them off hame to our ain house, and no person shall daur to hinder. If my puir misguided lassie had but ta'en my advice, she might ha'e been in the land o' the living at this day, and her father, my puir John, wouldna ha'e been the man he is. Is he ill, ye ask, mem ? No, he's no' just ill—but he's been kind o' dotedways since the news cam'. The doctor says, just to keep him cheery, and we maun aye mind there's a sure world abune, and I do my best—— But losh me ! " she cried, starting up as the coach entered the outskirts of Z—— " I had to get out near here, and this is the address written on a bit paper—the gude-man *would* put it down, like as I was a bairn, no' fit to take care o' mysel' ! I tell'd him he should row me up in broon paper, and stick the addresses on my back, like ane o' his harness-pieces ! Noo, I maun get out, laddie—I'm by the place, man ! "

The boy stopped the coach, she heartily bid us both good-day, to which we cordially responded, while the worthy little dame was landed amidst the muddy road, needing no help this time, however, on her way. She mingled with the thoroughfare as we rolled on, and we saw her no more.

A Visit to the Suez Canal.

"ACTUM EST ! My holiday is over !" I exclaimed, as I turned my back on Raphael's St. Cecilia at Bologna, and set my face towards Rimini. But who enjoys a holiday like a returned Sahib after his long absence from home ? The invigorating air of England seems to respond to his slightest movement, and breathe around him as it were a strange, delicious music. As for me, like a careful epicure resolved to sip enjoyment to the dregs, I had turned away from the Paradise of home to look in on the pleasant wickedness of Homburg, and had crossed the rushing Rhine at Basle before I remembered that the dawn of "Black Monday" was already reddening for me in the expectant East. Lausanne, musically named Lausanne, and "glorious Milan" were still before me. But these were fast-fleeting pleasures. Bologna, Rimini, Ancona, rapidly succeeded each other, and passed away like passing thoughts. At Brindisi, than which a more heaven-forsaken hole is nowhere to be found, the light had vanished altogether from my face ; but as I stepped on board the Italian steamer bound for Alexandria, the purpose I had formed to make a supplementary holiday of the trip through Egypt, and visit the works in progress through Suez and Port Saeed, threw a last ray of sunshine over my departing joys. Black Monday need not be so black after all.

Nevertheless, if I could have forgotten for a moment that my route lay "Eastward Ho !" the crowded deck of the steamer would very speedily have reminded me of the hard matter-of-fact. The majority of the passengers were returning to a land from which they had fled about four months previously in abject dread of the Cholera. Here was the whole Alexandrine world submitted to my observation in a microcosm. Such a Babel of languages, such a miscellany of nationalities—cigarette-smoking women of bilious complexion and portentous obesity, and fez-capped men, whose one hope was cotton, and whose one fear cholera, might be studied to advantage elsewhere in the Levant ; but nowhere would the individual characteristics be found more strikingly marked. Would I could sketch them with the felicity of Dumas, if it is to him we are indebted for the fancy that a modern Turk in tight frock-coat and fez resembles nothing so much as a bottle of old port, red-sealed !

Pacing the deck among these motley groups, as the vessel glides over the smooth and shining Adriatic, one is tempted to speculate on the construction of an exact scale of knavery which should teach how many Jews equal one Armenian, how many Armenians one Maltese, how many Maltese one Greek. Alexandria is the witches'-cauldron in which all these congenial elements seeth and fuse. A handful of Russians, some

Germans and English, many French and more Italians, are the ingredients added by commerce; Constantinople throws in a few Turkish officials, and finally Africa herself supplies the demands of physical labour in the persons of handsome brown Arabs, "with legs" (as Lady Duff Gordon says) "like John of Bologna's Mercury,"—swarthy Nubians grinning from ear to ear,—and Copts with features and complexion which exactly reproduce their blue-tinted progenitors on the mummy-cases in the British Museum. Madame Olympe Audouard, who should be an authority on the subject, characterizes the Greek and Italian merchants as vulgar and insolent, "*sans pareils*," and for a certain knot of the same races she can scarcely find language sufficiently strong—"sans foi, ni loi, voleurs et assassins, qui sont une des plaies d'Egypte. Ces Grecs, ces Italiens, se donnent des coups de couteau, se tirent des coups de revolver, très facilement et très fréquemment. 'Ils se tuent entre eux,' dit-on; 'tant mieux ! c'en est de moins.'" Still one must not be ungrateful. The fresh dates of Alexandria deserve some acknowledgment, and the polished rose-red column, miscalled Pompey's Pillar, worthily marks the site of a temple which rivalled in magnificence the Capitol of Rome. For the rest, indeed, the glorious city, whose foundation was foreshadowed by Homer, is no more as she has been. The palaces of Cleopatra have given place to the casinos, the *cafés-chantants*, and the gaming-hells of the Levantine. The schools of the dreamy Neo-Platonists have been succeeded by the counting-houses of too practical speculators; and on the whole it is a relief to exchange the tantalizing memories and the sordid realities of such a place for the still living romance of Cairo.

Cairo, as every one knows, is still essentially Oriental in appearance; more so than Benares, much more so than modern Lucknow. "See Naples and die," says the Italian proverb; but it is good, also, to look down on Cairo from its citadel, and live. That citadel was built by Saladin. The sumptuous mosque of Oriental alabaster through which you pass, is the burial-place of the victorious Mahomed Ali. You emerge upon the ramparts from which the last of the Mamelukes leapt for life, and won. And there you pause. The confused murmur of a great city lying far below surges up to you from a brown wilderness of building, pierced everywhere by countless minarets, and enframed in such peerless setting as only the flooded Nile and the everlasting Pyramids can give. Round the whole horizon stretches a placid labyrinth of water, among clustering islands of emerald verdure, where broad sails hover like white-winged birds, and the columnar date-palm floats double, palm and shadow. Beyond the Nile, and on the edge of the Libyan desert, behold the Pyramids! There they stand in the grey fervour of an Egyptian noon, austere and solitary within the sphere of their own religiousness. So stood they, already some centuries old, when the Chaldean sheikh Abram, with his too-beautiful Sarai, was driven by famine into the land of Egypt.

Of course I visited the Pyramids, and, as usual, the Arab ciceroni

did their best to destroy whatever enthusiasm the visit might have inspired. An imitation of three English cheers rang out from the gang of mendicants as I set my foot on the summit of the Great Pyramid; and the sound had scarcely died away when one of them struck up "Yankee Doodle," and a second, to make sure of my nationality, pointed out Napoleon's battle-field, and declaimed with effusion, "Soldats, quarante siècles vous regardent." In spite of this, one essays to look round with some little remaining impression of awe, and behold—Jenny Lind's name cut on the topmost stone by her servant! It is impossible not to laugh and light a cigar, though below you lies the Sphinx of Sphinxes, couchant among ten thousand sepulchres, and beside you rise other pyramids, where the kings of Memphis "lie in glory, every one in his own house."

I found simpler pleasure, before leaving Cairo to carry out my original purpose, at Heliopolis, the Aon or On of Ezekiel, and the Bethshemesh of Jeremiah. The low mounds of earth, with the fields and gardens comprised within their limits, look insignificant enough. Yet this is the undoubted site of the great Temple of the Sun, the high-priest of which was father-in-law to Joseph, and in later times the teacher of Moses. A long avenue of sphinxes which led up to the front of the temple, terminated in two obelisks with gilded apices—the gift, thirty-eight centuries ago, of Osirtasen the First, the prototype of the legendary Sesostris. One of these obelisks is still erect in its proper place. "It is the oldest known in Egypt, and therefore in the world—the father of all that have arisen since. It was raised about a century before the coming of Joseph; it has looked down on his marriage with Asenath; it has seen the growth of Moses; it is mentioned by Herodotus; Plato sat under its shadow. Of all the obelisks which sprung up around it, it alone has kept its first position. One by one, it has seen its sons and brothers depart to great destinies elsewhere. From these gardens came the obelisks of the Lateran, of the Vatican, and of the Porta del Popolo; and this venerable pillar (for so it looks from a distance) is now almost the only landmark of the great seat of the wisdom of Egypt."

Nor are these the only memories connected with the obelisk. Where the Indian corn now rustles round its base, once bloomed a garden of balsam, planted by Cleopatra. Never before her time had the Balm of Gilead passed out of Judæa; but if the "Serpent of old Nile" conceived a fancy, who was Herod that he should say her nay? Afterwards these plants travelled southwards into Arabia, and thus the whim of Antony's mistress still lives in the modern Balsam of Mecca. Even the lurid halo conferred by modern war is not wanting to complete the dignity of Heliopolis. Sixty-five years ago these mounds and fields were ringing with the din of battle: Ottoman horsemen dashing desperately upon the squares of France, and Kleber's grenadiers charging for the last victory their doomed general was destined to share.

While at Cairo, I amused myself, and was at the same time better prepared to understand what I should see of M. de Lesseps' undertaking,

by inquiring what history had to say concerning any similar attempt to unite the two seas in past ages. The idea of connecting the waters of the Red Sea with those of the Mediterranean is by no means a novelty. It suggested itself even more naturally to the despots of ancient times than to modern engineers. So long as the Cape of Good Hope remained undiscovered, the gold, ivory, apes, and peacocks of the Indian and Arabian trade had hardly any other route to the more northern centres of civilization than up the Red Sea. At first sight, however, an important difference is noticeable between the plan of M. de Lesseps and that of the Pharaohs and Ptolemies of old. The latter connected the Red Sea with the Pelusiac or Bubastic—that is, the most eastern—branch of the Nile, making that river their passage for the rest of the way to the Mediterranean; the modern canal is to span the isthmus in a direct line of its own, from one sea to the other. The ancient canal was known as the Canal of Hero; it is also sometimes called the Canal of Arsinoe. But the credit of its execution is due to Rameses the Second, the same monarch whose achievements under the name of Sesostris have made that name so renowned. Its origin, therefore, dates 1,800 years before the Christian era. The point at which it started from the Nile varied under the different works of restoration effected by succeeding princes, but the area of variation seems not to have extended beyond Bubastis to the north, and Belbays, 12 miles further south. From the neighbourhood of Bubastis thus defined, the water flowed nearly due east for 35 miles, and then curving southward, ran by the Bitter Lakes to the Red Sea. It is said to have been 100 feet broad by 40 deep, and probably it met the sea further north than could now be the case, the land about Suez having considerably risen since the days of the Pharaohs. After a lapse of seven centuries, during which neglect and the sandy nature of the soil had brought destruction to the channel, Pharaoh Necho set himself to repair the work of his great predecessor. One and twenty thousand men, according to Herodotus, perished in making the excavation, and at length the attempt was abandoned, because an oracle had warned the king that he was “labouring for the barbarian.” In 525 B.C., when Egypt became a satrapy of Persia, Darius completed what Necho had begun; and on the “Suez stone” near the embouchure of the canal, there is to be seen an inscription in the Persian cuneiform character, which reads—“Darius the Great King.” About 250 B.C., Ptolemy Philadelphus re-opened and improved the bed, and the Canal of Arsinoe derives its title from his sister, in whose honour he founded a town near the modern Suez. The work of Ptolemy appears to have been maintained till the commencement of our era, for Cleopatra, after the battle of Actium, talked of transporting her galleys to the Red Sea, and flying southwards with her Roman lover, to unknown lands beyond the power of their conqueror. After this the canal suffered from a long period of neglect, until, in the seventh century, the Caliph Omar won for himself and his successors the proud title of *Ameeer el Momeneen*, Prince of the Faithful, by once more making the waters flow in their accustomed

course, and so sending timely supplies of corn to the holy cities of Arabia. How long the passage remained open after Omar, is doubtful; for on the one hand, the same caliph who founded Bagdad is said to have purposely stopped the channel for political reasons, and, on the other, there is a story that English pilgrims sailed down it in the ninth century on their way to the Holy Land. When M. de Lesseps commenced operations, the only portion of the old work that remained practicable—and that solely for purposes of irrigation—was a length of some twenty-six miles at its commencement near Bubastis. This was called the El Wadee Canal, or Canal of the Valley; and it served to water the land round Tel-el-Kabeer, which is now known as the Wadee Estate (*Domaine de l'Ouady*). All the rest of its course was found to be choked with sand; nevertheless, at intervals, and especially between the Bitter Lakes and Suez, it was not difficult to trace vestiges of the ancient bed.

The modern French scheme embraces the following constructions:—

1. A maritime canal, 100 miles long, 189 feet broad, and 26 feet deep, from Port Saeed on the Mediterranean direct to Suez on the Red Sea.

2. A sweet-water canal, about 60 feet broad by 8 feet deep, which, starting from Zagazig on the Moës Canal, flows eastward to Lake Timsah, and there meets the maritime canal at a right angle half-way across the Isthmus. It then bends southward and runs in a parallel line with the maritime canal to Suez. Zagazig being close to Bubastis, and the Moës Canal almost identical with the old Tanitic branch of the Nile, this sweet-water canal is in fact little more than a reproduction of the ancient canal of the Pharaohs.

3. Another sweet-water canal, which is to be an essential feeder of the principal channel by bringing to it, at a point some 10 miles east of Zagazig, the waters of the Nile taken from the main stream near Cairo above the apex of the Delta. This channel is to be made entirely at the cost and under the direction of the Egyptian Government. It was begun a year ago on the very system of forced labour which the Pasha had withdrawn from the French, but was suspended in consequence of the cholera breaking out when but little progress had been made. The works have since been resumed, but I shall not find it necessary to say anything more concerning this supplementary channel.

The present state of the French works may be roughly summarised as follows:—The sweet-water canal is finished from Zagazig to Timsah, and thence to Suez. The great maritime canal is open, not in its full breadth or depth, but in a thin and shallow trench, known as the *Rigole*, from its terminus on the Mediterranean to its half-way station, Ismailia, on Lake Timsah, where it meets the sweet-water canal. By using, therefore, the maritime rigole at the northern end of the line, and the sweet-water canal at the southern, it is possible now to pass from one sea to the other, at least in one of the country boats. And this is the feat which, when first performed last August, brought telegraphic congratulations from the French Emperor to M. de Lesseps, perplexed the English press,

and roused in the rest of Europe a feeling of which the German *Kladderadatsch* was perhaps the best exponent, when it delineated M. de Lesseps triumphantly dragging a tiny boat from between the legs of John Bull, who vainly bestrides the new junction of the seas like a Colossus foiled and furious!

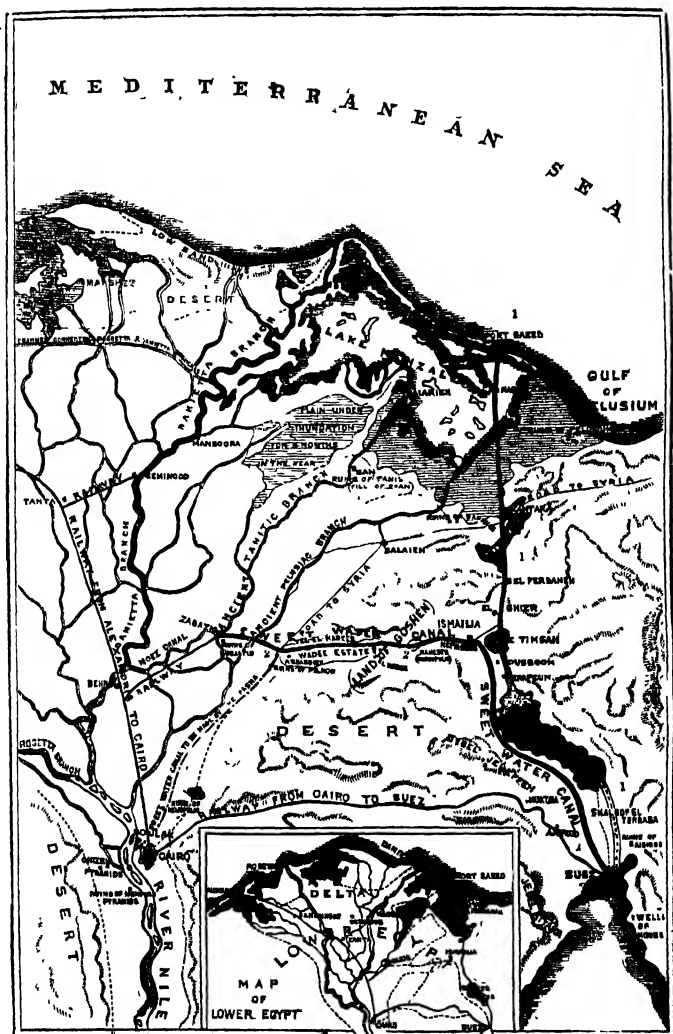
I will now describe, as intelligibly as possible, what I saw of the works—premising that I had brought to Cairo a letter of introduction from the India Office, and was not a little disappointed to find that the gentleman to whom it was addressed had started for Constantinople the day before my arrival at Cairo. Under these circumstances, I went direct to the office of the Canal Company, and threw myself on the courtesy of the agent. Signor Vernoni proved to be a gentleman of Scotch origin, whose family had long been domiciled in Italy, but he still bore the arms and well-known motto of the Vernons. Nothing could exceed his civility. I had only to explain who I was, and what I wanted, to be furnished with a letter which removed all difficulty, and next morning I started on my expedition, accompanied by a young Englishman, with whom the fortune of travel had made me acquainted. I was sorry to leave Cairo. In the Consul-General's hospitable rooms I had met a famous Eastern traveller, whose conversation was as charming as his deeds had been adventurous, and the evenings at Shepherd's Hotel were truly "*noctes cænæque dei*."

The train which runs from Cairo to Alexandria set us down at Benha-el-Assal, a town near the entrance of the Moës Canal, from which point a branch line took us eastward to Zagazig, skirting the south bank of the Moës. Nearly the whole distance a continuous line of trees, topped at intervals by a white sail or the trailing smoke of a steamer, renders the noble work of the founder of Cairo easily discernible along the whole line. Field after field of the most luxuriant cultivation attests the justice with which this ancient cutting has been styled the Golden Canal; and the nearer view, obtained at Zagazig, of a stream 150 feet broad, studded with islets, and navigable all the year for large boats, gives the impression rather of a river than of a canal.

Zagazig, where the sweet-water canal begins, is a dirty town, said to contain 30,000 inhabitants. Its rise is due less to the French Canal Company, which is here content to be slenderly represented, than to the world-wide influence of the American war. The value of the cotton brought through the place during the last year, for shipment at Alexandria, has been estimated at 1,800,000*l*. And to facilitate the transit of this enormous production, two new railways are soon to be opened—one direct to Cairo, and the other to Mansoura, on the Damietta branch of the Nile. But successful places, like successful people, are not always the most agreeable, and the neighbourhood of Zagazig has metal more attractive than its internal squalor. We were bent on visiting the ruins of Bubastis.

Neither horses nor donkeys being procurable, we started across country on foot. There stretched a green sheet of Indian corn and yellow-flowering cotton between us and the dun-coloured mounds of Tel Bast, and twice

SKETCH MAP OF THE ISTHMUS OF SUEZ.



- 1, 1, 1. The intended Maritime Canal direct from Port Said to Suez, part of its course, from Port Said to Lake Timsah, now opened to the navigation of small vessels, by means of a shallow hole.
 2, 2, 2. The Sweet-water Canal finished along its whole course.

we were turned back by coming suddenly upon one of the numerous water-courses which intersect the black soil in every direction.

A vast expanse of desolation, enclosed within a clearly defined circuit of lofty mounds, is all that remains of Bubastis. Knee-deep in powdery dust we climbed the shapeless hillocks that once were the outer ramparts of the city. Piles of crumbling earth, many of them covered almost as thickly with broken pottery as Monte Testaccio at Rome, lay confusedly heaped together, or separated by chasms of the most varied depth and steepness. Yet in the midst of this chaos it was possible here and there to discern the partial configuration of a street, and everywhere successive layers imprinted on the more upright masses of mould showed that the house walls had been built of the same crude brick which the Israelites found so difficult to manufacture out of Nile mud, without the usual mixture of chopped straw. Elsewhere time and the elements may have worked their will in vitrifying or petrifying, but here they have pulverised all the works of man. Deep in dusty death lies the metropolis which gave Solomon his haughtiest bride; where stood the palace which gave refuge to the infant Hadad, the last of his race, when Joab smote every male in Edom; and where Jeroboam fled for shelter after the dangerous distinction conferred on him by Abijah's prophecy. Not a living thing is now to be seen within the area from which Shishak issued forth, "with twelve hundred chariots and three-score thousand horsemen," to capture Jerusalem, and to spoil the Holy Temple of its golden shields. The ground on which we stand has been trodden by Herodotus, and the description he has left of the city is even now the best guide to its ruins. The glory of Bubastis centred in the temple and oracle of Pasht, with the "cat's head," a goddess whose attributes to some extent correspond with those of Diana. "The temple," says Herodotus, "stands in the middle of the city, and is visible on all sides as one walks round it, for, as the city has been raised up by embankment, while the temple has been left untouched in its original condition, you look down upon it wheresoever you are." And, just as Herodotus has said, we found ourselves looking down on a broad open space, which at the first glance proclaims itself as the site of the temple. A few gigantic fragments of sculptured granite strowed about the centre still testify to the magnificence that has passed away, and to the enormous force by which they were overthrown. The entire face of a granite obelisk in this area was found by the French expedition to be sculptured with stars; portions of a massive cornice and other huge fragments sculptured with strange hieroglyphs, were among the débris which have doubtless yielded valuable material for the history of Egyptian architecture. "Other temples may have been grander, and may have cost more in the building, but there was none so pleasant to the eye" of the artistic and travelled Greek "as this of Bubastis." And certainly it is difficult to imagine anything more beautiful than the picture he draws of a central shrine, towering in holy isolation above two broad rings of sheeny water, and an intermediate arcade of umbrageous trees.

Hither annually, when Pasht held her great festival, flocked myriads of pilgrims from the uttermost parts of Egypt. The old Greek estimated the number at 700,000, without counting children. Dropping down the Nile in large companies, they revelled all the way to Bubastis, the men piping and drinking, and the women now frolicking to the clatter of their own castanets, and now, as they sank on voluptuous cushions, singing songs soft, low, and sleepy as that of Pelagia—

Loose the sail, rest the oar, float away down,
 Fleeting and gliding by tower and town;
 Life is so short at best! Snatch, while thou canst, thy rest,
 Sleeping by me!

And on reaching their destination, it was a religious duty to give themselves up to the wildest orgies. For the goddess of "the gay Bubastian grove," however much she might resemble Diana in other respects, was in truth not

Our Dian of the North, who chains
 In vestal ice the current of young veins.

On returning to Zagazig, we found shelter at a small tavern called the "Hôtel des Français," and as evening fell, we commenced our voyage down the sweet-water canal. It has been explained above that the general direction of this canal is the same as that of the old canal of the Pharaohs, from which the ancient Tanitic branch of the Nile was continued through Lake Menzaleh to the sea. It now remains to be added that from Zagazig to Ras el Wadee the Company actually make use of the ancient bed of the Moës Canal, and to that extent realize the dream of the French savans who accompanied the first Napoleon to Egypt.

Ras el Wadee is at the eastern end of an oasis, called the Wadee Estate, which comprises by far the most profitable portion of M. de Lesseps' undertaking, and in this respect again does honour to the foresight of the old expedition.* This estate contains nearly 120,000 acres of excellent land, and is the absolute property of the Company, having been purchased by them from the late Viceroy for 84,000*l.* on some occasion when Saeed Pasha wanted money to distribute in largesses at Constantinople. Within fifteen months after the completion of the purchase, the area of cultivation had risen from 12,000 to 14,500 acres, and the amount realized from cotton alone, not to mention the value of the cereals, rose to 120,000*l.* Simultaneously the original population of 5,000 had been nearly doubled, and of the new cultivators 8,000 were wild Bedouins, whom the fair terms and good faith of European civilization had power to beguile from their world-old ways of wandering pillage in the desert. The chief place on the domain is Tel el Kabeer, where the wants of the Company's servants and tenants are sufficiently supplied by an hotel, three schools, and a handsome mosque. The town can also

* See *Projet d'un Etablissement d'Agriculture en Egypte*, la à l'Institut le 16 Vendémiaire, an 7.

boast of fine gardens, where among the orange, the plantain, the pomegranate and the rose of former owners, the French have lately planted the mulberry also, with a view to the breeding of silk-worms.

Silently, under the splendour of a full moon, we glided all night through the Land of Goshen. Near Abbassieh we passed the ruins of Pithom, and about four hours afterwards those of Rameses, the two ancient treasure-cities which the Israelites built for Pharaoh. It was from Rameses that the Israelites began their march under Moses towards the Promised Land; and consequently the line of the sweet-water canal from this point to Suez may serve to give some general indication of the path along which travelled the pillar of the cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night. The Arab name for the mounds of Rameses is Tel-el-Maskoota, but the Biblical designation has been revived by the French for the small station they have erected here.

Early in the morning we arrived at Ismailia, having previously passed on our right the sluice-gate at Nephisheh, through which the sweet-water canal branches south to Suez. Five years ago, Ismailia was simply part of the desert, and Lake Timsah, on which it stands, was dry. Ismailia is now a town of 5,000 inhabitants, and Timsah a broad sheet of water. The Director-General of the Works, and the Chief Engineer, with a numerous staff of officials, have their head-quarters at this central position; and the house occupied by the former, M. Voisin, is a strikingly handsome and commodious building, situated in a garden, the trees and flowers of which, considering their age, are wonderful. A word, too, must be said for the *Hôtel des Voyageurs*. Its exterior would be no discredit to any European city, while its interior arrangements are not much worse than those of the principal hotels in Alexandria. After breakfast we were annoyed to find that our hopes of going on to Port Saeed by the maritime canal were likely to be disappointed, because the Egyptian Governor of the Isthmus was also journeying in the same direction, and required for himself and his attendants the whole of the boat usually available for the conveyance of first-class passengers. There seemed no alternative between losing a day at Ismailia, or journeying by a very slow boat, crowded with dirty Arabs. Clearly it was high time to try what Signor Vernoni's letter of introduction would do for us, and so I went with it to M. Voisin. That gentleman was courteous even to kindness, and through his intercession we obtained permission to proceed to Port Saeed with the Governor.

We embarked about four P.M., and this time in a larger and far more comfortable boat than that which had brought us from Zagazig. The Governor proved to be a stately old Turk, unable to speak any language but his own. After exchanging with us, through an interpreter, a few compliments of truly Oriental hyperbole, he smoked in silence. But there was also on board a pleasant French gentleman, a M. Thevenet, with whom we soon made friends: he was a Civil Engineer, who, in the pursuit of his profession, had seen much of Algeria and Central America, and he was then engaged in ascertaining, from personal inspection, what facilities

there might be for the general introduction of steamers upon the existing channels of both the sweet-water canal and the *rigole*.

As already observed, the sweet-water canal diverges southward to Suez at Nephisheh, about two miles before reaching Ismailia. The channel by which it is continued beyond Ismailia one and a-half miles further east, to meet the maritime *rigole*, is called the *Canal de Service*. And by reason of the sweet-water canal lying nineteen feet above the level of the sea, that is, above the level of the *rigole*, any danger which the contact of sea-water might cause to the freshness of the sweet-water canal, has been easily obviated by the construction of a couple of locks on the *Canal de Service*. Passing through ~~these~~ locks, which are large, and exceedingly well built of stone brought from the quarries of Jebel Jeneffeh, we soon reached a desolate-looking mansion, built as a country residence by the Pasha, but already falling into disrepair before he has honoured it with a single visit. Here we debouched upon the narrow stream which for the present is all that appears of the great maritime canal. Nominally, the *rigole* is seventy-one feet broad at the surface of the water; but in some places it seems much less, and at others it expands to the full breadth of 189 feet. The depth throughout is insignificant, being barely six feet in any part of its course.

It was the salt wave of the Mediterranean up which we were now advancing, and on either side of us was the African desert. The tawny sand sparkled in the afternoon sun like gold-dust, and, to our left especially, it lay heaped—as the breath of the last stormy *khamseen* had left it—in billowing hillocks, or *dunes* of the most fantastic curvature. About sunset we arrived at El Ghizr. The French engineers have nowhere, except at Lake Menzaleh, greater difficulties to contend with than at this point. The high walls of sand, between which the *rigole* now ran like a slender thread, sufficiently showed how much there was yet to be done before the cutting could be completed in its proper depth and breadth. It was too dark, however, to distinguish anything but the gibbet-like outline of the excavating machines on the left bank; so, reserving an inspection of the works for our return voyage, we adjourned to dinner. Our own stock of comestibles was merely what the hotel at Ismailia had been able to supply, but M. Thevenet's hamper might have been turned out by Fortnum and Mason. He filled our plates with *pâté-de-foie-gras*, opened bottle after bottle of capital champagne, and was nearly inconsolable because he had forgotten to provide a finishing cup of coffee. Then the moon rose, and looked benignly down on us as we lay about the deck, smoking, laughing, and spinning travellers' yarns of many a "far-countrie." It was not till a late hour that we severally dropped off to couches where the mosquitoes had it all their own way.

At sunrise we woke to find that we had passed the station of *Kantara*, and were in the midst of Lake Menzaleh. Shortly afterwards we reached Ras-el-Esh, where we exchanged our boat towed by mules for a dandy little steamer. A fresh breeze danced over the surface of the lake. Large

fish were leaping in every ripple, and dense flights of water-fowl rustled in all directions through the air. At the same time there was something strange and almost uncanny in the sight of the sea-like waste of water up which we were sweeping, and the arrowy precision with which the thin line of low embankment on either side laid out the track before us, like the ropes of a racecourse, far as eye could reach. How strange to reflect that this waste of waters was once kept under control by the rulers of Egypt, and that the track marked out by French engineers may be but a dim foreshadowing of the future, when the ancient channels and outlets may be restored, and the whole of that fertile soil recovered for the use of man !

As we approached Port Saeed about nine A.M., our senses were offended with all the sights and sounds of a busy manufactory—smoke in the air, and coal-dust on the towing-path, steam-engines hissing, waggons rolling, and the incessant clink-clank of hammered iron. Port Saeed is not merely a haven for the disembarkation of all the material and stores drawn from France ; it also contains large and well-organized establishments necessary for the construction and repair of all the dredges and other machinery, the rolling-stock and the boats required along the whole line of the works.

Like Ismailia, Port Saeed is entirely a creation of the Company ; and, just as Ismailia derives its name from Ismail Pasha, the present Viceroy, so Port Saeed does honour to the memory of Saeed Pasha, his predecessor. The town stands on the long ridge of sand which separates Lake Menzaleh from the sea ; and the silt excavated at the mouth of the canal has been utilized to give width and elevation to a site which, in its natural condition, was barely 100 yards broad and 5 feet above the level of the sea. The canal, on reaching Port Saeed from the south, is intended to expand into a large inland harbour in the middle of the town, and then resuming its normal breadth to pass out to the Mediterranean between the stone walls of two long piers. Eventually, therefore, the town is to be bisected by the canal, but at present all that exists of Port Saeed lies, with the exception of a few warehouses, on the western bank. Its further development depends altogether upon the completion of the two piers, or at any rate of the western pier. The necessity for piers arises from the fact of there being a bar of sand along the whole coast, and this bar is so broad that the length which the walls for the protection of the cavity of the canal will have to extend before they reach the required depth of 26 feet has been estimated at from 2 to 3 miles. The western pier is the more important because there is a strong current uniformly setting down the coast from west to east. When that is finished, the very important object will have been gained of securing a shelter behind which vessels will be able to unload, dredges to work and double-bottomed lighters, laden with rubbish from the excavations inland, to get out to sea, and there dispose of their burden. Less progress has been made with the western pier than might have been expected, considering it was begun six years ago. The mode of construction first adopted was that of driving wooden piles into

the sand, fastening transverse beams to the piles, and finally filling up the timber-crate so formed with blocks of rough unhewn stone, brought from the village of Maks, near Alexandria. But the stones arrived in small quantities and at long intervals, while the injurious results of delay became daily more apparent. Accordingly a new plan had to be adopted. Iron piles were now sunk in sixteen feet of water, in the direction to be taken by the jetty, and upon them was built a platform intended to admit of vessels coming alongside and discharging cargo. It then remained to fill up with sunken stones the interval of 1,300 yards between the artificial island and the broken beginning of the pier; and this was the work we found going on at the time of our visit. The stones employed, however, were no longer the rough produce of the Maks quarry, but enormous cubical blocks of artificial stone, similar to those which have been used in the building of the quay in Dover harbour. They are manufactured by M. Dussaud on the spot, the elements of their composition being sea-sand and hydraulic lime. The junction with the island will be effected, probably, this spring, but even then the western pier will be finished in only about three-fifths of its full length. The eastern pier has not yet been commenced.

The future position of the inland harbour is marked out, and from the south-western angle of the nascent basin a branch-canal runs about a mile into Lake Menzaleh. This is called the Canal of Sheikh Karpootee, and it is intended to serve the double object of keeping Port Saeed in direct communication with Damietta, and of producing a current favourable to the maintenance of deep water in the harbour and at the mouth of the main canal. We noticed some five-and-twenty square-rigged vessels in the roadstead. The shipping which entered Port Saeed in 1864 is rated at 59,000 tons, spread over 467 vessels—a traffic exceeding that of Damietta and Rosetta combined. These figures of course prove only the utility of Port Saeed to the Canal Company, for although, since the junction of the rigole with the sweet-water canal at Ismailia, some small ventures of private enterprise have passed by water between Port Saeed and Suez, it cannot be said that Port Saeed has any appreciable traffic apart from the operations of the Company. I may here remark as an important fact in estimating the progress made by the Company, and the precedence given to certain works, that Port Saeed and all the stations on the rigole between it and Ismailia depend for their supply of fresh water entirely upon the sweet-water canal: the precious liquid is pumped to them from Ismailia through earthenware pipes, which run up the western bank of the rigole. There is also complete telegraphic communication along the whole line both of the rigole and of the sweet-water canal. We found very fair accommodation at the rather primitive establishment which does duty as hotel at Port Saeed, and whatever little defects might have been noticed were certainly not attributable to any want of goodwill on the part of our pleasant French landlady, or her really beautiful daughter.

In the afternoon, having said good-by to the hospitable M. Thevenet, we set out on our return. Our plan was to float down the rigole as far as El Ghizr, disembark there to see the works in progress, and then ride across the desert to Ismailia. The length of the rigole from Port Saeed to the Viceroy's villa near Ismailia, where it meets the *Canal de Service* from the sweet-water canal, is 46 miles, and this distance may, for engineering purposes, be divided into three portions, each of which has geographical features peculiar to itself. The first portion embraces the 24 miles of Lake Menzaleh; the second is 14 miles long, and derives its characteristic appearance from the Ballah Lakes; the third covers the remaining 8 miles, and contains the plateau of El Ghizr. A few words of description will serve to show the peculiar nature of the difficulties to be overcome in each part of the route.

Lake Menzaleh is the product partly of numerous canals from the Nile, and partly of the salt water flowing into it from the Mediterranean through four openings in the same narrow strip of land on which Port Saeed has been founded. These four openings were once so many distinct mouths of the Nile, and what is now a barren lagoon was formerly, as the reader has already been informed, a fertile plain, under cultivation in all its breadth, from Damietta to Pelusium. The soil here is a mixture of Nile mud and Mediterranean sand. It hardens by exposure to the sun, but in water decomposes into minute particles, which are caught up and carried away by the slightest ripple. The banks built of this treacherous substance are no sooner made than they begin to melt away under their own weight. Even at their best they quake under the tread of a camel, as if they rested on water. The channel they at present have to protect is only six feet deep; it is not easy, therefore, to prognosticate how they will be made to bear the increased pressure, both external and internal, sure to follow upon the canal being enlarged to its full dimensions. If all other means fail, M. de Lesseps is said to be prepared to accept the costly conclusion of sinking block after block of artificial stone, until a sound bottom for both banks is somehow found or made in the quagmire. This, it may be, is only a question of time and cost; and remembering the difficulties eventually overcome by our own engineers at Chat Moss, there seems to be no reason for despairing of success. Throughout the region of Lake Menzaleh the Company's operations appeared to be advancing with rather exceptional vigour; and it is only fair to remark that if the works generally had a somewhat languishing appearance, considerable allowance must be made for the accident of our visit occurring at a time when everything in Egypt still bore traces of the recent visitation of cholera. There are few parts of Egypt where the disease could have showed itself with more paralyzing power than on the Isthmus. The labourers all fled, and in Ismailia alone there were sixty deaths in a single day. At the time of our visit, the number of working dredges scattered over the first 18 miles of the channel, including Port Saeed, was stated to be thirty-five, but this probably was an excessive estimate, and the

dredges are not all of the same size or power. The average monthly out-turn of those originally employed was about 17,000 cubic feet for each dredge; but much better results have been obtained from several new machines recently imported from France. The silt they bring up is turned into a row of trucks, standing in a lighter; when the trucks are full, the lighter is towed under a steam-crane on the bank; and the trucks, lifted one after another by the crane, are made to empty out their contents on the other side of the embankment.

The second portion of the route may be passed over with a slight observation. The Ballah Lakes are a series of pools, deriving the salt water which they contain from their connection with Lake Menzaleh. The soil in this neighbourhood is sand and clay with large stratifications of sulphate of lime. Here the maritime canal exists in its full breadth, though in depth it is still only a rigole of five feet. This soil, of course, is not nearly so difficult to work.

At El Ghizr the difficulties are only second in importance to those of Lake Menzaleh. The lofty plateau of firm sand mixed with carbonate of lime which has here to be traversed, is eight miles long, and the total quantity of material, which from first to last will have to be excavated, has been estimated at 29,000,000 of cubic feet. The rigole as seen here seems not to have made much progress since it was first opened in November, 1862, with a breadth of 46 feet and a depth of 5 feet. It took only ten months to obtain this result, but then M. de Lesseps was working with 18,000 impressed Fellaheen, whereas for the last two years he has been obliged to fall back on machinery and free labour, which are found to be very expensive and inefficient substitutes. M. Couvreux, the contractor, who has undertaken to finish this portion of the canal by October, 1867, has brought to bear on so much of his task as lies above water, an ingenious apparatus, but as we arrived on a Sunday we had not the advantage of seeing the machine actually at work. In appearance it resembled a dredge made to work from the edge of the bank instead of in mid-stream, and its buckets, instead of groping for a semi-liquid substance under water, scrape themselves full of dry sand along the slope of the bank. Steam-power moves the machine on rails from place to place along the bank, and a zigzag continuation of the railway through four or five successive levels provides for a constant flow of empty trucks going down to the dredge to be filled, and full trucks travelling upwards to shoot their sand beyond the outer face of the embankment. The strength of the machines now at work is nominally estimated at 12 dredges served by 600 trucks.

In this neighbourhood is a small branch canal running eastward, the object of which is to provide carriage for the stone found in the adjacent hilla. The rigole here seems to mark out the eastern border of the future canal, as the excavations in progress are all on the western side. The station also is on the western side. The town is much smaller than Ismailia or Port Saeed; its inhabitants being merely the engineers,

mechanics, and labourers employed on the cutting, together with the few traders who supply their modest wants. The usual mosque and church, however, are not wanting, and the pretensions to elegance which we had already noticed about so many of the French houses on the Isthmus—even about those professedly of a rough and temporary character—were hardly less apparent here. For instance, the little tavern, where we obtained a cup of indifferent coffee, had the rustic pillars of its verandah festooned with some creeping plant, the foliage of which, contrasted with the barren brown sand all round, was singularly refreshing to the eye.

From El Ghizr we took donkeys to Ismailia. The distance is short, but there is no road between the two stations, only a track through the desert, marked at intervals by the carcase or skeleton of a camel that has fallen by the way. On arriving here, we were glad to rest a day at the *Hôtel des Voyageurs*, looking idly across the waters of Lake Timsah to the soft blue outline of the hills of Suez on the southern horizon. The maritime canal will pass through Lake Timsah, and the basin of the lake is intended to be a grand inland harbour; but nothing has yet been done towards this end beyond filling the formerly dry basin with water five feet deep, obtained partly from the salt rigole, and partly by branches from the sweet-water canal. In fact, south of Ismailia, the maritime canal is as yet unborn. Even in the form of rigole, it exists only at the three unconnected points of Toosoom, Serapeum, and Shalool-el-Terraba. People, therefore, who, as a young Russian lately did, go to look for the Suez Canal at Suez, will find there not a trace even of its commencement. M. de Lesseps considered, not without reason, that the first thing to be done was to establish water communication of some kind between his base of operations on the Mediterranean and the centre of the Isthmus: all his efforts have therefore been concentrated on the northern portion of the line, while the remainder is comparatively untouched.

The tract over which the southern portion of the canal will be carried is a breadth of 54 miles, which, from a geographical point of view, may be divided into four sections;—first, that of Lake Timsah, stretching southward for 13 miles from the Viceroy's villa near Ismailia; next, that of the Bitter Lakes, 21 miles long; next, the 10 miles about Shalool-el-Terraba; and lastly, the region near Suez, which takes up the remaining 10 miles, and is washed over by the waves of the Red Sea.

In the Timsah section, and immediately south of the lake, there is the small station of Toosoom, so called in honour of a son of the late Viceroy. Here for a distance of 4 miles, the rigole reappears, and though the depth is only 5 or 6 feet, it spans the full breadth of the future canal, as at the Ballah Lakes. Like the channel there, and the cutting through El Ghizr, this fine work is entirely the produce of the Arab spade and basket: and stands, in its comparative completeness, one more proof of the heavy blow and great discouragement which the Company has sustained from the withdrawal of the forced labour supplied by the late Pasha. The soil of the Timsah section is a sand which, while dry, holds together well enough

at an angle of 60 or 65 degrees, but in contact with water crumbles away and admits of only a very slight slope. Besides Toossoom, this section also includes the station of Serapeum, a name which appears to indicate proximity to the site of the ancient Serapeon. The difficulty to be overcome at Serapeum, though slighter in degree, is of the same quality as that already described at El Ghizr—namely, a high plateau of firm sand. The excavations here in progress extend north and south of the station about a mile and a half both ways, and it is hoped that towards the north a junction may soon be effected with the rigole at Toossoom. Much, however, remains to be done before even this can be accomplished, from the peculiar character of the works at Serapeum; the cutting here has not reached a sufficient depth to be on a level with the bottom of the rigole.

The Bitter Lakes were once a part of the Red Sea. This most probably was their condition when the miraculous passage of the Red Sea occurred. But the prophecy of Isaiah, that "the tongue of the Egyptian sea" should be destroyed, has long since been fulfilled, and now, not only are the lakes severed from the Red Sea by the sand-bank of Shaloof-el-Terraba, but they have also lost all their water by evaporation, and are in fact lakes no longer, but merely the basins of extinct lakes. Where the water formerly existed, is now a thick sheet of the purest salt, sparkling and bristling in irregular undulations like a *mer-de-glace*. Below the salt there is sand resting on a stratum of clay. The maritime canal is to traverse the length of the Bitter Lakes, but no works have yet been begun in this vicinity, and the ground is still untouched all the way from Serapeum to Shaloof. The bed of the Bitter Lakes is 26 feet below the low-tide level of the Red Sea; it is probable, therefore, that the French will have no difficulty in filling the basins as soon as they can bring the water of the Red Sea across the barrier at Shaloof.

At the last-mentioned point—a ridge in which sand and shells from the Red Sea cover large masses of pure clay and a considerable quantity of limestone—faint traces of the future canal are again discernible. Two miles of shallow excavation have been accomplished, which, however, do not yet contain any water. The hardness of the limestone gives rise to much difficulty, and apparently it has been found necessary to resort to blasting operations on a large scale. While we were at Ismailia, 200 Piedmontese miners were daily expected to pass through, on their way to Shaloof, and 200 more were to follow in a fortnight. The last, or Suez section of the canal, comprises 10 miles of lagoon, visited daily by the high tide of the Red Sea. The principal feature of the section is an island, called Turtle Island, chiefly composed of very hard limestone. The canal is meant to cross this island. But, as I have above intimated, no commencement of the maritime canal is yet to be seen near Suez.

This being the present state of the works, there would manifestly have been a weary ride through the desert, with little to be gained from it, if we had attempted to follow the future course of the maritime canal southwards. We determined, therefore, to voyage from Ismailia to Suez

by the sweet-water canal, stopping by the way to visit the excavations at Serapeum ; for from the middle of the Isthmus, where we now were, the two canals, it will be remembered, run in parallel lines to the Red Sea, and at Serapeum the distance by which they are separated is little more than a mile. We found that upon this portion of our journey the Company had not yet organized any regular service for travellers ; but the matter was soon settled by our engaging a boat exclusively for our own use.

Opening the sluice-gate at Nephisheh was a tedious business, and as we had started about noon, the sun meanwhile beat fiercely through our canvas roof. The gates once passed, however, and our southward course to Suez fairly commenced, the air became cooler, and the rest of the voyage proved delightful. Floating through the desert had still the charm of novelty. Our camels trotted briskly along the towing-path, their tall, ungainly outline traced sharply against the sky, and one of their riders crooning a monotonous ditty that was not without a slumbrous suitability to the scene. A thin fringe of lately planted tamarisk adorned either bank, but otherwise not a trace of vegetable life was to be seen for miles. It was a little excitement to meet, as we did twice, other travellers upon our silent highway, and there was even some amusement in practically testing at times the fact of our boatmen being as absolutely ignorant of any European language as we were of Arabic.

At four o'clock we sighted the few houses of Toosoom lying stranded in the desert on our left, and about an hour later we reached the spot at which we had arranged to disembark, in order to proceed on foot to Serapeum. Here we found a station in the same style as that of El Ghizr, but smaller. The *chef-de-station* hospitably entertained us in his garden with vermouth and cigarettes, and took pains to explain to us the nature of the works under his superintendence. They are certainly ingenious. The bed of the sweet-water canal, as I have mentioned before, is nineteen feet above the level of the sea, and, consequently, of the rigole. Advantage has been taken of this circumstance to make the preliminary excavations at Serapeum only of a sufficient depth to admit of their being filled from the neighbouring sweet-water canal by a channel cut for the purpose. When that is done dredges are to be introduced, and to their mechanical aid will be resigned the business of completing the excavations down to a depth corresponding with the level of the rigole. When that depth has been reached, the supply of water from the sweet-water canal will be cut off, and a union effected between the rigole at Toosoom and the bed prepared for its entrance at Serapeum. In the meantime the silt brought up by the dredges is to be shot into a number of artificial basins specially constructed on one side of the growing channel. At the present time some three miles of trench, into which water has been admitted, are ready for the application of the dredge, and several dredges are shortly expected from Port Saeed. But evidently our host would have preferred the manual labour of 15,000 *fellaheen* to any quantity of machinery. Just

now he has not more than 400 men at work, three-fourths of whom are Arabs and Syrians, and the remainder Europeans of all sorts, chiefly Greeks and Italians, with a very few French.

It was dark by the time we returned to our boat on the sweet-water canal; and when we awoke next morning we were near Suez. We had thus missed one or two points of interest which the sweet-water canal in its southern extension has to show. For instance, there are four unfinished locks at the distance respectively of 10, 26, 42, and 51 miles below Nephisheh, which are each to be built of a single mass of artificial stone. The material of the stone is mixed on the spot and beaten down by paviors' rammers until layer after layer may have hardened into a homogeneous mass. Near the thirty-third mile there is a small railway, say about a mile long, running in from the westward, and connecting the canal with the important stone-quarries of Jebel Jeneffeh. Lastly, four miles of the canal beginning from the forty-fifth-mile were worthy of observation as being identical to that extent with the old canal of the Pharaohs: the French engineers found the bed made ready to their hands, and had simply to let in the water.

The town of Suez has much changed during the last few years. Formerly it was a petty collection of Arab hovels, which once a week used to be scared from its propriety by an irruption of noisy Englishmen on their way to or from India. And no other Europeans were ever seen. Now it is an important town, in which the French play quite as prominent a part as the English. Then there was no drinking-water except what was painfully fetched on camels' backs from the fountain of El Ghurkudeh on the other side of the Fords. Now the French canal has brought the Nile itself to Suez. In the harbour we found three steamers of the *Messageries Impériales* and but two of the Peninsular and Oriental Company, the former in size and power of speed looking at least the equals of the latter. By their side lay a transport of the Imperial Government, waiting to take French troops to Cochin China; for Saigon, be it understood, receives all its reinforcements through Egypt, while not even the crisis of the Indian mutiny has sufficed to tempt England's soldiery to the Overland route. The hotel at Suez is English, and so is the steam-machinery belonging to the Peninsular and Oriental Company, but these count as nothing when compared with the splendid dry dock now in course of construction by the Messageries Company, at an estimated cost of 820,000*l*. This dock, which will be ready for use next summer, is built of stone specially imported from France. Its dimensions (442 feet long by 91 broad, with 23 feet depth of water when the caisson-gates are opened,) will allow the largest ships, whether of war or of mercantile marine, to be admitted for repair. It is connected with the shore by a railway running along an artificial causeway nearly two miles long, and if, as appears likely, a landing-quay be added, ocean steamers will be enabled to disembark their passengers and goods without the present troublesome intervention of a smaller steamer. Thus perfectly equipped at one end of

the line, and preparing similar arrangements at Saigon, the Messageries Company seems anxious to create for France as strong an interest in Eastern waters as the Canal Company has already given her in the Isthmus of Suez. Neither has the Messageries Company been behind the other in endeavouring to obtain their ends by spoiling the Egyptian. The Pasha bears the whole expense of the docks and all the works connected with it, but the use of it for half the year is to be vested in the French Company.

And now what are the probabilities as to the ultimate success or failure of M. de Lesseps' great scheme?

The French Bourse replies that the Company's shares of 500 francs are still worth 430; and the last English newspaper I saw contains a brief telegraphic notice of a meeting of contented shareholders at Paris, and of an assurance then having been given by M. de Lesseps that the maritime canal should be definitively opened to ships of all dimensions by the middle of the year 1868. The popular voice in England condemns the author of the project as an adventurer, who will have swindled the shareholders out of their last sou long before the physical difficulties of the Isthmus can be overcome; but in Egypt, where probably M. de Lesseps is better known, he is everywhere recognized as a sincere enthusiast, absolutely above any suspicion of a grovelling motive. With regard to the natural difficulties of the soil, I would venture to suggest, if there is any value in the platitude which declares every engineering operation to be merely a question of time and money, that sufficient consideration has perhaps hardly been given in England to the extraordinary advantages with which the undertaking was commenced. The Egyptian Government subscribed for more than two millions sterling of the Company's stock. Whatever land might appear requisite for the execution of the canal was conceded to the Company, and, if such land belonged to the Egyptian Government, no compensation was to be asked for it. All uncultivated land which could be brought under cultivation by irrigation from the sweet-water canal was to belong to the Company, and for the first ten years of possession no rent whatever was to be paid. Then there was the large and annually increasing profit from the Waddeh Estate near Bubastis. And finally, Saeed Pasha had pledged himself to keep the works constantly supplied with 20,000 impressed labourers, brought from all parts of Egypt and delivered free of any expense to the Company at Zagazig. This last item was perhaps the most valuable of all. Given an inexhaustible supply of labour, and impossibilities in Egypt cease to be impossibilities, as the Pyramids alone are enough to prove. It is the unforeseen withdrawal or endangerment of these essential concessions by the present Viceroy, Ismail Pasha, more than any original miscalculation of the magnitude of the task, which now threatens the Company with serious danger. In the perpetual rivalry between France and England of which Egypt is the scene, Saeed Pasha, the late Viceroy, declared himself unequivocally the partisan of France; his successor, Ismail Pasha, is said to devote himself with an unprejudiced impartiality to the

accumulation of money. Possibly, therefore, Ismail Pasha may have imagined that the fellaheen would be more profitably employed in covering his own vast private estates with cotton than in burrowing through a desert for the French. At any rate, he made no difficulty in yielding to the representations addressed to him by the Sublime Porte, and not only stopped the guaranteed supply of forced labour, but further signified his intention of resuming the whole of the land ceded by his predecessor. The Company energetically protested against this breach of contract, and strove hard to prove to the Pasha that the pressure put on him from Constantinople originated only in the silly malevolence of England, and that he would be playing the part of a political suicide if he allowed the Porte to interfere in a question so purely domestic. But Ismail Pasha refused to be convinced, and M. de Lesseps was obliged to content himself with a compromise, by which the whole dispute between the Viceroy and the Company was to be referred for arbitration to the Emperor, in virtue of whose award the Egyptian Government has to pay the Company a compensation of 3,360,000*l*. Ismail Pasha cannot directly evade his obligation to abide by this result; but it is one that he little expected, and the probability seems to be, that he will shelter himself behind the further mediation of the Turkish Government, which affects to consider the whole proceeding as beyond the competency of the Sultan's lieutenant. Here, evidently, are the materials of an imbroglio which may eventually lead to a conference between the Great Powers of Europe, and in that event, what consideration is likely to be given to the interests of a private company of shareholders?

In the meantime, England's mistrust of the cosmopolitan professions of that same Company has been M. de Lesseps' opportunity. Nothing has more helped him to keep up the flagging enthusiasm of patriotic shareholders than the carefully fostered belief that their purses are measured not merely against land and sea, but against the gratuitous animosity of perfidious Albion to boot. And yet the English objections can hardly be called groundless. It is the real, even if incorrect, belief of all our capitalists, engineers, and sailors, that the enormous cost of making and maintaining the canal, combined with the fact of the Red Sea not being navigable for sailing ships, will suffice to render the project, even if accomplished, a commercial failure, as completely ruinous to those concerned as was the grand Scotch expedition in the last century for the colonization of the Isthmus of Darien. While France, therefore, regards the canal as a glorious step in the general progress of humanity, England has no sympathy to spare for a bubble which she is daily expecting to see burst. Nor can our statesmen forget that this very canal figured prominently among the Napoleonic ideas, and that General Bonaparte was in actual occupation of the Isthmus when he wrote to the Directory, saying—"Whatever European Power holds Egypt permanently is, in the end, mistress of India." And it is no sufficient answer to such misgivings to appeal to the palpably peaceful

character of the works in progress. They still represent a French colony, the utility of which to the French Government, in case of war, would be in no degree lessened by the circumstances of its having been founded by private capital with perfectly innocent intentions. If ever again the terrific game of war is started between France and England, Egypt is foredoomed to be once more a battle-field; and this being so, it is but natural that England should see with dissatisfaction her rival snatching a point of vantage beforehand. At the same time there is a possibility that the value of the point may be over-rated. If peace lasts, as it probably will, until England shall have secured an alternative route to her Eastern possessions through Syria and the valley of the Euphrates, India may afford to laugh at the dictum of the first Bonaparte. And even under present circumstances, a French occupation of Egypt could have no more offensive power against India—so long as our naval supremacy remained intact in the Indian Ocean and at the mouth of the Red Sea—than it had in 1798. At the worst, the arm of England is not shortened since the days when Nelson and Abercrombie beat the troops of France hopelessly out of Egypt. And if there is a new danger added in the proximity of the Zouaves and Turcos of Algeria, there may be some consolation also in the thought that the contingent which India would now send up to the fight would be no more the poor 6,000 Sepoys led by Baird, but five times that number of Sikhs and Punjabees, men of the stuff that made Hardinge and Gough reel doubtfully in the shock of combat at Ferozeshuhur, and that Hope, Grant, and Napier have since carried triumphantly to Peking.

Quò, Musa, tendis? What hast thou to do with European politics? There is no forgetting Black Monday now! The lights of Suez have faded away in darkness behind me, and the good ship is speeding southward under the shadow of Mount Sinai. It is just a decade ago since, one of a band of eager writers and cadets, I first paced this starlit deck, or gazed over the bulwark into this phosphorescent sea. Where are they all gone, those "old familiar faces?" The fate of some is written in the red battle-rolls of Delhi and Lucknow, and one, the best and brightest of them all, fills a lonely grave in the jungle. Yet is there a remnant left to give me greeting as soon as I step once more on the Indian strand, and meanwhile there is kindly fellowship to be read in many a worn countenance among those now grouped around me—soldiers returning to their regiments, and civilians to their districts, all of them growling out regrets for the dear country left behind them, and all in their secret hearts mingling with those regrets a proud anticipation of the work awaiting them in India.

One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by war and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find and not to yield!



A FRIENDLY TALK

THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

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The Claverings.

CHAPTER VII.

SOME SCENES IN THE LIFE OF A COUNTESS.



ABOUT the middle of January Harry Clavering went up to London, and settled himself to work at Mr. Beilby's office. Mr. Beilby's office consisted of four or five large chambers, overlooking the river from the bottom of Adam Street in the Adelphi, and here Harry found a table for himself in the same apartment with three other pupils. It was a fine old room, lofty, and with large windows, ornamented on the ceiling with Italian scrollwork, and a flying goddess in the centre. In days gone by the house had been the habitation of some great rich man, who had there enjoyed the sweet breezes from the river before London had become the London of the present days, and when no embankment had been needed for the Thames. Nothing could be

nicer than his room, or more pleasant than the table and seat which he was to occupy near a window; but there was something in the tone of the other

men towards him which did not quite satisfy him. They probably did not know that he was a fellow of a college, and treated him almost as they might have done had he come to them direct from King's College, in the Strand, or from the London University. Down at Stratton, a certain amount of honour had been paid to him. They had known there who he was, and had felt some deference for him. They had not slapped him on the back, or poked him in the ribs, or even called him old fellow, before some length of acquaintance justified such appellation. But up at Mr. Beilby's, in the Adelphi, one young man, who was certainly his junior in age, and who did not seem as yet to have attained any high position in the science of engineering, manifestly thought that he was acting in a friendly and becoming way by declaring the stranger to be a lad of wax on the second day of his appearance. Harry Clavering was not disinclined to believe that he was a "lad of wax," or "a brick," or "a trump," or "no small beer." But he desired that such complimentary and endearing appellations should be used to him only by those who had known him long enough to be aware that he deserved them. Mr. Joseph Walliker certainly was not as yet among this number.

There was a man at Mr. Beilby's, who was entitled to greet him with endearing terms, and to be so greeted himself, although Harry had never seen him till he attended for the first time at the Adelphi. This was Theodore Burton, his future brother-in-law, who was now the leading man in the London house ;—the leading man as regarded business, though he was not as yet a partner. It was understood that this Mr. Burton was to come in when his father went out ; and in the meantime he received a salary of a thousand a year as managing clerk. A very hard-working, steady, intelligent man was Mr. Theodore Burton, with a bald head, a high forehead, and that look of constant work about him which such men obtain. Harry Clavering could not bring himself to take a liking to him, because he wore cotton gloves and had an odious habit of dusting his shoes with his pocket-handkerchief. Twice Harry saw him do this on the first day of their acquaintance, and he regretted it exceedingly. The cotton gloves too were offensive, as were also the thick shoes which had been dusted ; but the dusting was the great sin.

And there was something which did not quite please Harry in Mr. Theodore Burton's manner, though the gentleman had manifestly intended to be very kind to him. When Burton had been speaking to him for a minute or two, it flashed across Harry's mind that he had not bound himself to marry the whole Burton family, and that, perhaps, he must take some means to let that fact be known. "Theodore," as he had so often heard the younger Mr. Burton called by loving lips, seemed to claim him as his own, called him Harry, and upbraided him with friendly warmth for not having come direct to his,—Mr. Burton's,—house in Onslow Crescent. "Pray feel yourself at home there," said Mr. Burton. "I hope you'll like my wife. You needn't be afraid of being made to be idle if you spend your evenings there, for we are all reading people. Will you

come and dine to-day?" Florence had told him that she was her brother Theodore's favourite sister, and that Theodore as a husband and a brother, and a man, was perfect. But Theodore had dusted his boots with his handkerchief, and Harry Clavering would not dine with him on that day.

And then it was painfully manifest to him that every one in the office knew his destiny with reference to old Burton's daughter. He had been one of the Stratton men, and no more than any other had he gone unscathed through the Stratton fire. He had been made to do the regular thing, as Granger, Scarness, and others had done it. Stratton would be safer ground now, as Clavering had taken the last. That was the feeling on the matter which seemed to belong to others. It was not that Harry thought in this way of his own Florence. He knew well enough what a lucky fellow he was to have won such a girl. He was well aware how widely his Florence differed from Carry Scarness. He denied to himself indignantly that he had any notion of repenting what he had done. But he did wish that these private matters might have remained private, and that all the men at Beilby's had not known of his engagement. When Walliker, on the fourth day of their acquaintance, asked him if it was all right at Stratton, he made up his mind that he hated Walliker, and that he would hate Walliker to the last day of his life. He had declined the first invitation given to him by Theodore Burton; but he could not altogether avoid his future brother-in-law, and had agreed to dine with him on this day.

On that same afternoon Harry, when he left Mr. Beilby's office, went direct to Bolton Street, that he might call on Lady Ongar. As he went thither he bethought himself that these Wallikers and the like had had no such events in life as had befallen him! They laughed at him about Florence Burton, little guessing that it had been his lot to love, and to be loved by such a one as Julia Brabazon had been,—such a one as Lady Ongar now was. But things had gone well with him. Julia Brabazon could have made no man happy, but Florence Burton would be the sweetest, dearest, truest little wife that ever man ever took to his home. He was thinking of this, and determined to think of it more and more daily, as he knocked at Lady Ongar's door. "Yes; her ladyship was at home," said the servant whom he had seen on the railway platform; and in a few moments' time he found himself in the drawing-room which he had criticized so carefully when he was taking it for its present occupant.

He was left in the room for five or six minutes, and was able to make a full mental inventory of its contents. It was very different in its present aspect from the room which he had seen not yet a month since. She had told him that the apartments had been all that she desired; but since then everything had been altered, at least in appearance. A new piano had been brought in, and the chintz on the furniture was surely new. And the room was crowded with small feminine belongings, indicative of wealth and luxury. There were ornaments about, and pretty toys, and a thousand knickknacks which none but the rich can possess, and which none can possess even among the rich unless they can give

taste as well as money to their acquisition. Then he heard a light step ; the door opened, and Lady Ongar was there.

He expected to see the same figure that he had seen on the railway platform, the same gloomy drapery, the same quiet, almost deathlike demeanour, nay, almost the same veil over her features ; but the Lady Ongar whom he now saw was as unlike that Lady Ongar as she was unlike that Julia Brabazon whom he had known in old days at Clavering Park. She was dressed, no doubt, in black ; nay, no doubt, she was dressed in weeds ; but in spite of the black and in spite of the weeds there was nothing about her of the weariness or of the solemnity of woe. He hardly saw that her dress was made of crape, or that long white pendants were hanging down from the cap which sat so prettily upon her head. But it was her face at which he gazed. At first he thought that she could hardly be the same woman, she was to his eyes so much older than she had been ! And yet as he looked at her, he found that she was as handsome as ever,—more handsome than she had ever been before. There was a dignity about her face and figure which became her well, and which she carried as though she knew herself to be in very truth a countess. It was a face which bore well such signs of age as those which had come upon it. She seemed to be a woman fitter for womanhood than for girlhood. Her eyes were brighter than of yore, and, as Harry thought, larger ; and her high forehead and noble stamp of countenance seemed fitted for the dress and headgear which she wore.

"I have been expecting you," said she, stepping up to him. "Hermione wrote me word that you were to come up on Monday. Why did you not come sooner ?" There was a smile on her face as she spoke, and a confidence in her tone which almost confounded him.

"I have had so many things to do," said he lamely.

"About your new profession. Yes, I can understand that. And so you are settled in London now ? Where are you living ;—that is, if you are settled yet ?" In answer to this, Harry told her that he had taken lodgings in Bloomsbury Square, blushing somewhat as he named so unfashionable a locality. Old Mrs. Burton had recommended him to the house in which he was located, but he did not find it necessary to explain that fact to Lady Ongar.

"I have to thank you for what you did for me," continued she. "You ran away from me in such a hurry on that night that I was unable to speak to you. But to tell the truth, Harry, I was in no mood then to speak to any one. Of course you thought that I treated you ill."

"Oh, no," said he.

"Of course you did. If I thought you did not, I should be angry with you now. But had it been to save my life I could not have helped it. Why did not Sir Hugh Clavering come to meet me ? Why did not my sister's husband come to me ?" To this question Harry could make no answer. He was still standing with his hat in his hand, and now turned his face away from her and shook his head.

"Sit down, Harry," she said, "and let me talk to you like a friend ; —unless you are in a hurry to go away."

"Oh, no," said he, seating himself.

"Or unless you, too, are afraid of me."

"Afraid of you, Lady Ongar?"

"Yes, afraid; but I don't mean you. I don't believe that you are coward enough to desert a woman who was once your friend because misfortune has overtaken her, and calumny has been at work with her name."

"I hope not," said he.

"No, Harry; I do not think it of you. But if Sir Hugh be not a coward, why did he not come and meet me? Why has he left me to stand alone, now that he could be of service to me? I knew that money was his god, but I have never asked him for a shilling and should not have done so now. Oh, Harry, how wicked you were about that cheque! Do you remember?"

"Yes; I remember."

"So shall I; always, always. If I had taken that money how often should I have heard of it since?"

"Heard of it?" he asked. "Do you mean from me?"

"Yes; how often from you? Would you have dunned me, and told me of it once a week? Upon my word, Harry, I was told of it more nearly every day. Is it not wonderful that men should be so mean?"

It was clear to him now that she was talking of her husband who was dead, and on that subject he felt himself at present unable to speak a word. He little dreamed at that moment how openly she would soon speak to him of Lord Ongar and of Lord Ongar's faults!

"Oh, how I have wished that I had taken your money! But never mind about that now, Harry. Wretched as such taunts were, they soon became a small thing. But it has been cowardly in your cousin, Hugh; has it not? If I had not lived with him as one of his family, it would not have mattered. People would not have expected it. It was as though my own brother had cast me forth."

"Lady Clavering has been with you; has she not?"

"Once, for half-an-hour. She came up for one day, and came here by herself, cowering as though she were afraid of me. Poor Hermy! She has not a good time of it either. You lords of creation lead your slaves sad lives when it pleases you to change your billing and cooing for matter-of-fact masterdom and rule. I don't blame Hermy. I suppose she did all she could, and I did not utter one word of reproach of her. Nor should I to him. Indeed, if he came now the servant would deny me to him. He has insulted me, and I shall remember the insult."

Harry Clavering did not clearly understand what it was that Lady Ongar had desired of her brother-in-law,—what aid she had required; nor did he know whether it would be fitting for him to offer to act in Sir Hugh's place. Anything that he could do, he felt himself at that moment willing to do, even though the necessary service should demand

some sacrifice greater than prudence could approve. "If I had thought that anything was wanted, I should have come to you sooner," said he.

"Everything is wanted, Harry. Everything is wanted;—except that cheque for six hundred pounds which you sent me so treacherously. Did you ever think what might have happened if a certain person had heard of that? All the world would have declared that you had done it for your own private purposes;—all the world, except one."

Harry, as he heard this, felt that he was blushing. Did Lady Ongar know of his engagement with Florence Burton? Lady Clavering knew it, and might probably have told the tidings; but then, again, she might not have told them. Harry at this moment wished that he knew how it was. All that Lady Ongar said to him would come with so different a meaning according as she did, or did not know that fact. But he had no mind to tell her of the fact himself. He declared to himself that he hoped she knew it, as it would serve to make them both more comfortable together; but he did not think that it would do for him to bring forward the subject, neck and heels as it were. The proper thing would be that she should congratulate him, but this she did not do. "I certainly meant no ill," he said, in answer to the last words she had spoken.

"You have never meant ill to me, Harry; though you know you have abused me dreadfully before now. I daresay you forget the hard names you have called me. You men do forget such things."

"I remember calling you one name."

"Do not repeat it now, if you please. If I deserved it, it would shame me; and if I did not, it should shame you."

"No; I will not repeat it."

"Does it not seem odd, Harry, that you and I should be sitting, talking together in this way?" She was leaning now towards him, across the table, and one hand was raised to her forehead while her eyes were fixed intently upon his. The attitude was one which he felt to express extreme intimacy. She would not have sat in that way, pressing back her hair from her brow, with all appearance of widowhood banished from her face, in the presence of any but a dear and close friend. He did not think of this, but he felt that it was so, almost by instinct. "I have such a tale to tell you," she said; "such a tale!"

Why should she tell it to him? Of course he asked himself this question. Then he remembered that she had no brother,—remembered also that her brother-in-law had deserted her, and he declared to himself that, if necessary, he would be her brother. "I fear that you have not been happy," said he, "since I saw you last."

"Happy!" she replied. "I have lived such a life as I did not think any man or woman could be made to live on this side the grave. I will be honest with you, Harry. Nothing but the conviction that it could not be for long, has saved me from destroying myself. I knew that he must die!"

"Oh, Lady Ongar!"

"Yes, indeed; that is the name he gave me; and because I con-

sented to take it from him, he treated me;—O heavens! how am I to find words to tell you what he did, and the way in which he treated me. A woman could not tell it to a man. Harry, I have no friend that I trust but you, but to you I cannot tell it. When he found that he had been wrong in marrying me, that he did not want the thing which he had thought would suit him, that I was a drag upon him rather than a comfort,—what was his mode, do you think, of ridding himself of the burden?" Clavering sat silent looking at her. Both her hands were now up to her forehead, and her large eyes were gazing at him till he found himself unable to withdraw his own for a moment from her face. "He strove to get another man to take me off his hands; and when he found that he was failing,—he charged me with the guilt which he himself had contrived for me."

"Lady Ongar!"

"Yes; you may well stare at me. You may well speak hoarsely and look like that. It may be that even you will not believe me;—but by the God in whom we both believe, I tell you nothing but the truth. He attempted that and he failed,—and then he accused me of the crime which he could not bring me to commit."

"And what then?"

"Yes; what then? Harry, I had a thing to do, and a life to live, that would have tried the bravest; but I went through it. I stuck to him to the last! He told me before he was dying,—before that last frightful illness, that I was staying with him for his money. 'For your money, my lord,' I said, 'and for my own name.' And so it was. Would it have been wise in me, after all that I had gone through, to have given up that for which I had sold myself? I had been very poor, and had been so placed that poverty, even such poverty as mine, was a curse to me. You know what I gave up because I feared that curse. Was I to be foiled at last, because such a creature as that wanted to shirk out of his bargain? I knew there were some who would say I had been false. Hugh Clavering says so now, I suppose. But they never should say I had left him to die alone in a foreign land."

"Did he ask you to leave him?"

"No;—but he called me that name which no woman should hear and stay. No woman should do so unless she had a purpose such as mine. He wanted back the price that he had paid, and I was determined to do nothing that should assist him in his meanness! And then, Harry, his last illness! Oh, Harry, you would pity me if you could know all!"

"It was his own intemperance!"

"Intemperance! It was brandy,—sheer brandy. He brought himself to such a state that nothing but brandy would keep him alive, and in which brandy was sure to kill him;—and it did kill him. Did you ever hear of the horrors of drink?"

"Yes; I have heard of such a state."

"I hope you may never live to see it. It is a sight that would stick

by you for ever. But I saw it, and tended him through the whole, as though I had been his servant. I remained with him when that man who opened the door for you could no longer endure the room. I was with him when the strong woman from the hospital, though she could not understand his words, almost fainted at what she saw and heard. He was punished, Harry. I need wish no farther vengeance on him, even for all his cruelty, his injustice, his unmanly treachery. Is it not fearful to think that any man should have the power of bringing himself to such an end as that?"

Harry was thinking rather how fearful it was that a man should have it in his power to drag any woman through such a Gehenna as that which this lord had created. He felt that had Julia Brabazon been his, as she had once promised him, he never would have allowed himself to speak a harsh word to her, to have looked at her except with loving eyes. But she had chosen to join herself to a man who had treated her with a cruelty exceeding all that his imagination could have conceived. "It is a mercy that he has gone," said he at last.

"It is a mercy for both. Perhaps you can understand now something of my married life. And through it all I had but one friend;—if I may call him a friend who had come to terms with my husband, and was to have been his agent in destroying me. But when this man understood from me that I was not what he had been taught to think me,—which my husband had told him I was,—he relented."

"May I ask what was that man's name?"

"His name is Pateroff. He is a Pole, but he speaks English like an Englishman. In my presence he told Lord Ongar that he was false and brutal. Lord Ongar laughed, with that little, low, sneering laughter which was his nearest approach to merriment, and told Count Pateroff that that was of course his game before me. There, Harry,—I will tell you nothing more of it. You will understand enough to know what I have suffered; and if you can believe that I have not sinned——"

"Oh, Lady Ongar!"

"Well, I will not doubt you again. But as far as I can learn you are nearly alone in your belief. What Hermy thinks I cannot tell, but she will soon come to think as Hugh may bid her. And I shall not blame her. What else can she do, poor creature?"

"I am sure she believes no ill of you."

"I have one advantage, Harry,—one advantage over her and some others. I am free. The chains have hurt me sorely during my slavery; but I am free, and the price of my servitude remains. He had written home,—would you believe that?—while I was living with him he had written home to say that evidence should be collected for getting rid of me. And yet he would sometimes be civil, hoping to cheat me into inadvertencies. He would ask that man to dine, and then of a sudden would be absent; and during this he was ordering that evidence should be collected! Evidence, indeed! The same servants have lived with me through it all. If I could now bring forward evidence I could make

it all clear as the day. But there needs no care for a woman's honour, though a man may have to guard his by collecting evidence!"

"But what he did cannot injure you."

"Yes, Harry, it has injured me; it has all but destroyed me. Have not reports reached even you? Speak out like a man, and say whether it is not so?"

"I have heard something."

"Yes, you have heard something! If you heard something of your sister where would you be? All the world would be a chaos to you till you had pulled out somebody's tongue by the roots. Not injured me! For two years your cousin Hugh's house was my home. I met Lord Ongar in his house. I was married from his house. He is my brother-in-law, and it so happens that of all men he is the nearest to me. He stands well before the world, and at this time could have done me real service. How is it that he did not welcome me home;—that I am not now at his house with my sister; that he did not meet me so that the world might know that I was received back among my own people? Why is it, Harry, that I am telling this to you;—to you, who are nothing to me; my sister's husband's cousin; a young man, from your position not fit to be my confidant? Why am I telling this to you, Harry?"

"Because we are old friends," said he, wondering again at this moment whether she knew of his engagement with Florence Burton.

"Yes, we are old friends, and we have always liked each other; but you must know that, as the world judges, I am wrong to tell all this to you. I should be wrong,—only that the world has cast me out, so that I am no longer bound to regard it. I am Lady Ongar, and I have my share of that man's money. They have given me up Ongar Park, having satisfied themselves that it is mine by right, and must be mine by law. But he has robbed me of every friend I had in the world, and yet you tell me he has not injured me!"

"Not every friend."

"No, Harry, I will not forget you, though I spoke so slightly of you just now. But your vanity need not be hurt. It is only the world,—Mrs. Grundy, you know, that would deny me such friendship as yours; not my own taste or choice. Mrs. Grundy always denies us exactly those things which we ourselves like best. You are clever enough to understand that."

He smiled and looked foolish, and declared that he only offered his assistance because perhaps it might be convenient at the present moment. What could he do for her? How could he show his friendship for her now at once?

"You have done it, Harry, in listening to me and giving me your sympathy. It is seldom that we want any great thing from our friends. I want nothing of that kind. No one can hurt me much further now. My money and my rank are safe; and, perhaps, by degrees, acquaintances, if not friends, will form themselves round me again. At present, of

course, I see no one; but because I see no one, I wanted some one to whom I could speak. Poor Hermy is worse than no one. Good-by, Harry; you look surprised and bewildered now, but you will soon get over that. Don't be long before I see you again."

Then, feeling that he was bidden to go, he wished her good-by, and went.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HOUSE IN ONSLOW CRESCENT.

HARRY, as he walked away from the house in Bolton Street, hardly knew whether he was on his heels or his head. Burton had told him not to dress—"We don't give dress dinner parties, you know. It's all in the family way with us,"—and Harry, therefore, went direct from Bolton Street to Onslow Crescent. But, though he managed to keep the proper course down Piccadilly, he was in such confusion of mind that he hardly knew whither he was going. It seemed as though a new form of life had been opened to him, and that it had been opened in such a way as almost necessarily to engulf him. It was not only that Lady Ongar's history was so terrible, and her life so strange, but that he himself was called upon to form a part of that history, and to join himself in some sort to that life. This countess with her wealth, her rank, her beauty, and her bright intellect had called him to her, and told him that he was her only friend. Of course he had promised his friendship. How could he have failed to give such a promise to one whom he had loved so well? But to what must such a promise lead, or rather to what must it not have led had it not been for Florence Burton? She was young, free, and rich. She made no pretence of regret for the husband she had lost, speaking of him as though in truth she hardly regarded herself as his wife. And she was the same Julia whom he had loved, who had loved him, who had jilted him, and in regret for whom he had once resolved to lead a wretched, lonely life! Of course she must expect that he would renew it all;—unless, indeed, she knew of his engagement. But if she knew it, why had she not spoken of it?

And could it be that she had no friends,—that everybody had deserted her, that she was all alone in the world? As he thought of it all, the whole thing seemed to him to be too terrible for reality. What a tragedy was that she had told him! He thought of the man's insolence to the woman whom he had married and sworn to love, then of his cruelty, his fiendish, hellish cruelty,—and lastly of his terrible punishment. "I stuck to him through it all," she had said to him; and then he endeavoured to picture to himself that bedside by which Julia Brabazon, his Julia Brabazon, had remained firm, when hospital attendants had been scared by the horrors they had witnessed, and the nerves of a strong man,—of a man paid for such work, had failed him!

The truth of her word throughout he never doubted ; and, indeed, no man or woman who heard her could have doubted. One hears stories told that to oneself, the hearer, are manifestly false ; and one hears stories as to the truth or falsehood of which one is in doubt ; and stories again which seem to be partly true and partly untrue. But one also hears that of the truth of which no doubt seems to be possible. So it had been with the tale which Lady Ongar had told. It had been all as she had said ; and had Sir Hugh heard it,—even Sir Hugh, who doubted all men and regarded all women as being false beyond doubt,—even he, I think, would have believed it.

But she had deserved the sufferings which had come upon her. Even Harry, whose heart was very tender towards her, owned as much as that. She had sold herself, as she had said of herself more than once. She had given herself to a man whom she regarded not at all, even when her heart belonged to another,—to a man whom she must have loathed and despised when she was putting her hand into his before the altar. What scorn had there been upon her face when she spoke of the beginning of their married miseries ! With what eloquence of expression had she pronounced him to be vile, worthless, unmanly ; a thing from which a woman must turn with speechless contempt ! She had now his name, his rank, and his money, but she was friendless and alone. Harry Clavering declared to himself that she had deserved it,—and, having so declared, forgave her all her faults. She had sinned, and then had suffered ; and, therefore, should now be forgiven. If he could do aught to ease her troubles, he would do it,—as a brother would for a sister.

But it would be well that she should know of his engagement. Then he thought of the whole interview, and felt sure that she must know it. At any rate he told himself that he was sure. She could hardly have spoken to him as she had done, unless she had known. When last they had been together, sauntering round the gardens at Clavering, he had rebuked her for her treachery to him. Now she came to him almost open-armed, free, full of her cares, swearing to him that he was her only friend ! All this could mean but one thing,—unless she knew that that one thing was barred by his altered position.

But it gratified him to think that she had chosen him for the repository of her tale ; that she had told her terrible history to him. I fear that some small part of this gratification was owing to her rank and wealth. To be the one friend of a widowed countess, young, rich, and beautiful, was something much out of the common way. Such confidence lifted him far above the Wallikers of the world. That he was pleased to be so trusted by one that was beautiful, was, I think, no disgrace to him ; —although I bear in mind his condition as a man engaged. It might be dangerous, but that danger in such case it would be his duty to overcome. But in order that it might be overcome, it would certainly be well that she should know his position.

I fear he speculated as he went along as to what might have been his

condition in the world had he never seen Florence Burton. First he asked himself, whether under any circumstances, he would have wished to marry a widow, and especially a widow by whom he had already been jilted. Yes; he thought that he could have forgiven her even that, if his own heart had not changed; but he did not forget to tell himself again how lucky it was for him that his heart was changed. What countess in the world, let her have what park she might, and any imaginable number of thousands a year, could be so sweet, so nice, so good, so fitting for him as his own Florence Burton? Then he endeavoured to reflect what happened when a commoner married the widow of a peer. She was still called, he believed, by her old title, unless she should choose to abandon it. Any such arrangement was now out of the question; but he thought that he would prefer that she should have been called Mrs. Clavering, if such a state of things had come about. I do not know that he pictured to himself any necessity, either on her part or on his, of abandoning anything else that came to her from her late husband.

At half-past six, the time named by Theodore Burton, he found himself at the door in Onslow Crescent, and was at once shown up into the drawing-room. He knew that Mr. Burton had a family, and he had pictured to himself an untidy, ugly house, with an untidy, motherly woman going about with a baby in her arms. Such would naturally be the home of a man who dusted his shoes with his pocket-handkerchief. But to his surprise he found himself in as pretty a drawing-room as he remembered to have seen; and seated on a sofa, was almost as pretty a woman as he remembered. She was tall and slight, with large brown eyes and well-defined eyebrows, with an oval face, and the sweetest, kindest mouth that ever graced a woman. Her dark brown hair was quite plain, having been brushed simply smooth across the forehead, and then collected in a knot behind. Close beside her, on a low chair, sat a little fair-haired girl, about seven years old, who was going through some pretence at needlework; and kneeling on a higher chair, while she sprawled over the drawing-room table, was another girl, some three years younger, who was engaged with a puzzle-box.

"Mr. Clavering," said she, rising from her chair; "I am so glad to see you, though I am almost angry with you for not coming to us sooner. I have heard so much about you; of course you know that." Harry explained that he had only been a few days in town, and declared that he was happy to learn that he had been considered worth talking about.

"If you were worth accepting you were worth talking about."

"Perhaps I was neither," said he.

"Well; I am not going to flatter you yet. Only as I think our Flo is without exception the most perfect girl I ever saw, I don't suppose she would be guilty of making a bad choice. Cissy, dear, this is Mr. Clavering."

Cissy got up from her chair, and came up to him. "Mamma says I am to love you very much," said Cissy, putting up her face to be kissed.

"But I did not tell you to say I had told you," said Mrs. Burton, laughing.

"And I will love you very much," said Harry, taking her up in his arms.

"But not so much as Aunt Florence,—will you?"

They all knew it. It was clear to him that everybody connected with the Burtons had been told of the engagement, and that they all spoke of it openly, as they did of any other everyday family occurrence. There was not much reticence among the Burtons. He could not but feel this, though now, at the present moment, he was disposed to think specially well of the family because Mrs. Burton and her children were so nice.

"And this is another daughter?"

"Yes; another future niece, Mr. Clavering. But I suppose I may call you Harry; may I not? My name is Cecilia. Yes, that is Miss Pert."

"I'm not Miss Pert," said the little soft round ball of a girl from the chair. "I'm Sophy Burton. Oh! you musn't tittle."

Harry found himself quite at home in ten minutes; and before Mr. Burton had returned, had been taken upstairs into the nursery to see Theodore Burton Junior in his cradle, Theodore Burton Junior being as yet only some few months old. "Now you've seen us all," said Mrs. Burton, "and we'll go downstairs and wait for my husband. I must let you into a secret, too. We don't dine till past seven; you may as well remember that for the future. But I wanted to have you for half-an-hour to myself before dinner, so that I might look at you, and make up my mind about Flo's choice. I hope you won't be angry with me?"

"And how have you made up your mind?"

"If you want to find that out, you must get it through Florence. You may be quite sure I shall tell her; and, I suppose, I may be quite sure she will tell you. Does she tell you everything?"

"I tell her everything," said Harry, feeling himself, however, to be a little conscience-smitten at the moment, as he remembered his interview with Lady Ongar. Things had occurred this very day which he certainly could not tell her.

"Do;—do; always do that," said Mrs. Burton, laying her hand affectionately on his arm. "There is no way so certain to bind a woman to you, heart and soul, as to show her that you trust her in everything. Theodore tells me everything. I don't think there's a drain planned under a railway-bank, but that he shows it me in some way; and I feel so grateful for it. It makes me know that I can never do enough for him. I hope you'll be as good to Flo, as he is to me."

"We can't both be perfect, you know."

"Ah, well! of course you'll laugh at me. Theodore always laughs at me when I get on what he calls a high horse. I wonder whether you are as sensible as he is?"

Harry reflected that he never wore cotton gloves. "I don't think I

am very sensible," said he. "I do a great many foolish things, and the worst is, that I like them."

"So do I. I like so many foolish things?"

"Oh, mamma!" said Cissy.

"I shall have that quoted against me, now, for the next six months, whenever I am preaching wisdom in the nursery. But Florence is nearly as sensible as her brother."

"Much more so than I am."

"All the Burtons are full up to their eyes with good sense. And what a good thing it is! Who ever heard of any of them coming to sorrow? Whatever they have to live on, they always have enough. Did you ever know a woman who has done better with her children, or has known how to do better, than Theodore's mother? She is the dearest old woman." Harry had heard her called a very clever old woman by certain persons in Stratton, and could not but think of her matrimonial successes as her praises were thus sung by her daughter-in-law.

They went on talking, while Sophy sat in Harry's lap, till there was heard the sound of the key in the latch of the front-door, and the master of the house was known to be there. "It's Theodore," said his wife, jumping up and going out to meet him. "I'm so glad that you have been here a little before him, because now I feel that I know you. When he's here I shan't get in a word." Then she went down to her husband, and Harry was left to speculate how so very charming a woman could ever have been brought to love a man who cleaned his boots with his pocket-handkerchief.

There were soon steps again upon the stairs, and Burton returned bringing with him another man whom he introduced to Harry as Mr. Jones. "I didn't know my brother was coming," said Mrs. Burton, "but it will be very pleasant, as of course I shall want you to know him." Harry became a little perplexed. How far might these family ramifications be supposed to go? Would he be welcomed, as one of the household, to the hearth of Mrs. Jones; and if of Mrs. Jones, then of Mrs. Jones's brother? His mental inquiries, however, in this direction, were soon ended by his finding that Mr. Jones was a bachelor.

Jones, it appeared, was the editor, or sub-editor, or co-editor, of some influential daily newspaper. "He is a night bird, Harry—," said Mrs. Burton. She had fallen into the way of calling him Harry at once, but he could not on that occasion bring himself to call her Cecilia. He might have done so had not her husband been present, but he was ashamed to do it before him. "He is a night bird, Harry," said she, speaking of her brother, "and flies away at nine o'clock, that he may go and hoot like an owl in some dark city haunt that he has. Then, when he is himself asleep at breakfast-time, his hootings are being heard round the town."

Harry rather liked the idea of knowing an editor. Editors were, he thought, influential people, who had the world very much under their feet,—being, as he conceived, afraid of no men, while other men are very

much afraid of them. He was glad enough to shake Jones by the hand, when he found that Jones was an editor. But Jones, though he had the face and forehead of a clever man, was very quiet, and seemed almost submissive to his sister and brother-in-law.

The dinner was plain, but good, and Harry after a while became happy and satisfied, although he had come to the house with something almost like a resolution to find fault. Men, and women also, do frequently go about in such a mood, having unconsciously from some small circumstance, prejudged their acquaintances, and made up their mind that their acquaintances should be condemned. Influenced in this way, Harry had not intended to pass a pleasant evening, and would have stood aloof and been cold, had it been possible to him; but he found that it was not possible; and after a little while he was friendly and joyous, and the dinner went off very well. There was some wild-fowl, and he was agreeably surprised as he watched the mental anxiety and gastronomic skill with which Burton went through the process of preparing the gravy, with lemon and pepper, having in the room a little silver-pot and an apparatus of fire for the occasion. He would as soon have expected the Archbishop of Canterbury himself to go through such an operation in the dining-room at Lambeth as the hard-working man of business whom he had known in the chambers at the Adelphi.

"Does he always do that, Mrs. Burton?" Harry asked.

"Always," said Burton, "when I can get the materials. One doesn't bother oneself about a cold leg of mutton, you know, which is my usual dinner when we are alone. The children have it hot in the middle of the day."

"Such a thing never happened to him yet, Harry," said Mrs. Burton.

"Gently with the pepper," said the editor. It was the first word he had spoken for some time.

"Be good enough to remember that, yourself, when you are writing your article to-night."

"No, none for me, Theodore," said Mrs. Burton.

"Cissy!"

"I have dined really. If I had remembered that you were going to display your cookery, I would have kept some of my energy, but I forgot it."

"As a rule," said Burton, "I don't think women recognize any difference in flavours. I believe wild duck and hashed mutton would be quite the same to my wife if her eyes were blinded. I should not mind this, if it were not that they are generally proud of the deficiency. They think it grand."

"Just as men think it grand not to know one tune from another," said his wife.

When dinner was over, Burton got up from his seat. "Harry," said he, "do you like good wine?" Harry said that he did. Whatever women may say about wild-fowl, men never profess an indifference to good wine,

although there is a theory about the world, quite as incorrect as it is general, that they have given up drinking it. "Indeed, I do," said Harry. "Then I'll give you a bottle of port," said Burton, and so saying he left the room.

"I'm very glad you have come to-day," said Jones, with much gravity. "He never gives me any of that when I'm alone with him; and he never, by any means, brings it out for company."

"You don't mean to accuse him of drinking it alone, Tom?" said his sister, laughing.

"I don't know when he drinks it; I only know when he doesn't."

The wine was decanted with as much care as had been given to the concoction of the gravy, and the clearness of the dark liquid was scrutinized with an eye that was full of anxious care. "Now, Cissy, what do you think of that? She knows a glass of good wine when she gets it, as well as you do, Harry; in spite of her contempt for the duck."

As they sipped the old port they sat round the dining-room fire, and Harry Clavering was forced to own to himself that he had never been more comfortable.

"Ah," said Burton, stretching out his slippered feet, "why can't it all be after-dinner, instead of that weary room at the Adelphi?"

"And all old port?" said Jones.

"Yes, and all old port. You are not such an ass as to suppose that a man in suggesting to himself a continuance of pleasure suggests to himself also the evils which are supposed to accompany such pleasure. If I took much of the stuff I should get cross and sick, and make a beast of myself; but then what a pity it is that it should be so."

"You wouldn't like much of it, I think," said his wife.

"That is it," said he. "We are driven to work because work never palls on us, whereas pleasure always does. What a wonderful scheme it is when one looks at it all. No man can follow pleasure long continually. When a man strives to do so, he turns his pleasure at once into business, and works at that. Come, Harry, we mustn't have another bottle, as Jones would go to sleep among the type." Then they all went upstairs together. Harry, before he went away, was taken again up into the nursery, and there kissed the two little girls in their cots. When he was outside the nursery door, on the top of the stairs, Mrs. Burton took him by the hand. "You'll come to us often," said she, "and make yourself at home here, will you not?" Harry could not but say that he would. Indeed he did so without hesitation, almost with eagerness, for he had liked her and had liked her house. "We think of you, you know," she continued, "quite as one of ourselves. How could it be otherwise when Flo is the dearest to us of all beyond our own?"

"It makes me so happy to hear you say so," said he.

"Then come here and talk about her. I want Theodore to feel that you are his brother; it will be so important to you in the business that it should be so." After that he went away, and as he walked back along

Piccadilly, and then up through the regions of St. Giles to his home in Bloomsbury Square, he satisfied himself that the life of Onslow Crescent was a better manner of life than that which was likely to prevail in Bolton Street.

When he was gone his character was of course discussed between the husband and wife in Onslow Crescent. "What do you think of him?" said the husband.

"I like him so much! He is so much nicer than you told me,—so much pleasanter and easier; and I have no doubt he is as clever, though I don't think he shows that at once."

"He is clever enough; there's no doubt about that."

"And did you not think he was pleasant?"

"Yes; he was pleasant here. He is one of those men who get on best with women. You'll make much more of him for awhile than I shall. He'll gossip with you and sit idling with you for the hour together, if you'll let him. There's nothing wrong about him, and he'd like nothing better than that."

"You don't believe that he's idle by disposition? Think of all that he has done already."

"That's just what is most against him. He might do very well with us if he had not got that confounded fellowship; but having got that, he thinks the hard work of life is pretty well over with him."

"I don't suppose he can be so foolish as that, Theodore."

"I know well what such men are, and I know the evil that is done to them by the cramming they endure. They learn many names of things,—high-sounding names, and they come to understand a great deal about words. It is a knowledge that requires no experience and very little real thought. But it demands much memory; and when they have loaded themselves in this way, they think that they are instructed in all things. After all, what can they do that is of real use to mankind? What can they create?"

"I suppose they are of use."

"I don't know it. A man will tell you, or pretend to tell you,—for the chances are ten to one that he is wrong,—what sort of lingo was spoken in some particular island or province six hundred years before Christ. What good will that do any one, even if he were right? And then see the effect upon the men themselves! At four-and-twenty a young fellow has achieved some wonderful success, and calls himself by some outlandish and conceited name—a double first, or something of the kind. Then he thinks he has completed everything, and is too vain to learn anything afterwards. The truth is, that at twenty-four no man has done more than acquire the rudiments of his education. The system is bad from beginning to end. All that competition makes false and imperfect growth. Come, I'll go to bed."

What would Harry have said if he had heard all this from the man who dusted his boots with his handkerchief?

CHAPTER IX.

TOO PRUDENT BY HALF.

FLORENCE BURTON thought herself the happiest girl in the world. There was nothing wanting to the perfection of her bliss. She could perceive, though she never allowed her mind to dwell upon the fact, that her lover was superior in many respects, to the men whom her sisters had married. He was better educated, better looking, in fact more fully a gentleman at all points than either Scarness or any of the others. She liked her sisters' husbands very well, and in former days, before Harry Clavering had come to Stratton, she had never taught herself to think that she, if she married, would want anything different from that which Providence had given to them. She had never thrown up her head, or even thrown up her nose, and told herself that she would demand something better than that. But not the less was she alive to the knowledge that something better had come in her way, and that that something better was now her own. She was very proud of her lover, and, no doubt, in some gently feminine way showed that she was so as she made her way about among her friends at Stratton. Any idea that she herself was better educated, better looking, or more clever than her elder sisters, and that, therefore, she was deserving of a higher order of husband, had never entered her mind. The Burtons in London,—Theodore Burton and his wife,—who knew her well, and who, of all the family, were best able to appreciate her worth, had long been of opinion that she deserved some specially favoured lot in life. The question with them would be, whether Harry Clavering was good enough for her.

Everybody at Stratton knew that she was engaged, and when they wished her joy she made no coy denials. Her sisters had all been engaged in the same way, and their marriages had gone off in regular sequence to their engagements. There had never been any secret with them about their affairs. On this matter the practice is very various among different people. There are families who think it almost indelicate to talk about marriage, as a thing actually in prospect for any of their own community. An ordinary acquaintance would be considered to be impertinent in even hinting at such a thing, although the thing were an established fact. The engaged young ladies only whisper the news through the very depths of their pink note-paper, and are supposed to blush as they communicate the tidings by their pens, even in the retirement of their own rooms. But there are other families in which there is no vestige of such mystery, in which an engaged couple are spoken of together as openly as though they were already bound in some sort of public partnership. In these families the young ladies talk openly of their lovers, and generally prefer that subject of conversation to any other. Such a family,—so little mysterious,—so open in their arrangements, was that of the Burtons at Stratton. The reserve in the reserved families is usually atoned for by the magnificence

of the bridal arrangements, when the marriage is at last solemnized; whereas, among the other set,—the people who have no reserve,—the marriage when it comes, is customarily an affair of much less outward ceremony. They are married without blast of trumpet, with very little profit to the confectioner, and do their honeymoon, if they do it at all, with prosaic simplicity.

Florence had made up her mind that she would be in no hurry about it. Harry was in a hurry; but that was a matter of course. He was a quick-blooded, impatient, restless being. She was slower, and more given to consideration. It would be better that they should wait, even if it were for five or six years. She had no fear of poverty for herself. She had lived always in a house in which money was much regarded, and among people who were of inexpensive habits. But such had not been his lot, and it was her duty to think of the mode of life which might suit him. He would not be happy as a poor man,—without comforts around him, which would simply be comforts to him though they would be luxuries to her. When her mother told her, shaking her head rather sorrowfully as she heard Florence talk, that she did not like long engagements, Florence would shake hers too, in playful derision, and tell her mother not to be so suspicious. "It is not you that are going to marry him, mamma."

"No, my dear; I know that. But long engagements never are good. And I can't think why young people should want so many things, now, that they used to do without very well when I was married. When I went into housekeeping, we only had one girl of fifteen to do everything; and we hadn't a nursemaid regular till Theodore was born; and there were three before him."

Florence could not say how many maid-servants Harry might wish to have under similar circumstances, but she was very confident that he would want much more attendance than her father and mother had done, or even than some of her brothers and sisters. Her father, when he first married, would not have objected, on returning home, to find his wife in the kitchen, looking after the progress of the dinner; nor even would her brother Theodore have been made unhappy by such a circumstance. But Harry, she knew, would not like it; and therefore Harry must wait. "It will do him good, mamma," said Florence. "You can't think that I mean to find fault with him; but I know that he is young in his ways. He is one of those men who should not marry till they are twenty-eight, or thereabouts."

"You mean that he is unsteady?"

"No,—not unsteady. I don't think him a bit unsteady; but he will be happier single for a year or two. He hasn't settled down to like his tea and toast when he is tired of his work, as a married man should do. Do you know that I am not sure that a little flirtation would not be very good for him?"

"Oh, my dear!"

"It should be very moderate, you know."

"But then, suppose it wasn't moderate. I don't like to see engaged young men going on in that way. I suppose I'm very old-fashioned; but I think when a young man is engaged, he ought to remember it and to show it. It ought to make him a little serious, and he shouldn't be going about like a butterfly, that may do just as it pleases in the sunshine."

During the three months which Henry remained in town before the Easter holidays he wrote more than once to Florence, pressing her to name an early day for their marriage. These letters were written, I think, after certain evenings spent under favourable circumstances in Onslow Crescent, when he was full of the merits of domestic comfort, and perhaps also owed some of their inspiration to the fact that Lady Ongar had left London without seeing him. He had called repeatedly in Bolton Street, having been specially pressed to do so by Lady Ongar, but he had only once found her at home, and then a third person had been present. This third person had been a lady who was not introduced to him, but he had learned from her speech that she was a foreigner. On that occasion Lady Ongar had made herself gracious and pleasant, but nothing had passed which interested him, and, most unreasonably, he had felt himself to be provoked. When next he went to Bolton Street he found that Lady Ongar had left London. She had gone down to Ongar Park, and, as far as the woman at the house knew, intended to remain there till after Easter. Harry had some undefined idea that she should not have taken such a step without telling him. Had she not declared to him that he was her only friend? When a friend is going out of town, leaving an only friend behind, that friend ought to tell her only friend what she is going to do, otherwise such a declaration of only-friendship means nothing. Such was Harry Clavering's reasoning, and having so reasoned, he declared to himself that it did mean nothing, and was very pressing to Florence Burton to name an early day. He had been with Cecilia, he told her,—he had learned to call Mrs. Burton Cecilia in his letters,—and she quite agreed with him that their income would be enough. He was to have two-hundred a year from his father, having brought himself to abandon that high-toned resolve which he had made some time since that he would never draw any part of his income from the parental coffers. His father had again offered it, and he had accepted it. Old Mr. Burton was to add a hundred, and Harry was of opinion that they could do very well. Cecilia thought the same, he said, and therefore Florence surely would not refuse. But Florence received, direct from Onslow Crescent, Cecilia's own version of her thoughts, and did refuse. It may be surmised that she would have refused even without assistance from Cecilia, for she was a young lady not of a fickle or changing disposition. So she wrote to Harry with much care, and as her letter had some influence on the story to be told, the reader shall read it,—if the reader so pleases.

DEAR HARRY,—

Stratton. March, 186—.

I RECEIVED your letter this morning, and answer it at once, because I know you will be impatient for an answer. You are impatient about things,—are you not? But it was a kind, sweet, dear, generous letter, and I need not tell you now that I love the writer of it with all my heart. I am so glad you like Cecilia. I think she is the perfection of a woman. And Theodore is every bit as good as Cecilia, though I know you don't think so, because you don't say so. I am always happy when I am in Onslow Crescent. I should have been there this spring, only that a certain person who chooses to think that his claims on me are stronger than those of any other person wishes me to go elsewhere. Mamma wishes me to go to London also for a week, but I don't want to be away from the old house too much before the final parting comes at last.

And now about the final parting; for I may as well rush at it at once. I need hardly tell you that no care for father or mother shall make me put off my marriage. Of course I owe everything to you now; and as they have approved it, I have no right to think of them in opposition to you. And you must not suppose that they ask me to stay. On the contrary, mamma is always telling me that early marriages are best. She has sent all the birds out of the nest but one; and is impatient to see that one fly away, that she may be sure that there is no lame one in the brood. You must not therefore think that it is mamma; nor is it papa, as regards himself,—though papa agrees with me in thinking that we ought to wait a little.

Dear Harry, you must not be angry, but I am sure that we ought to wait. We are, both of us, young, and why should we be in a hurry? I know what you will say, and of course I love you the more because you love me so well; but I fancy that I can be quite happy if I can see you two or three times in the year, and hear from you constantly. It is so good of you to write such nice letters, and the longer they are the better I like them. Whatever you put in them, I like them to be full. I know I can't write nice letters myself, and it makes me unhappy. Unless I have got something special to say, I am dumb.

But now I have something special to say. In spite of all that you tell me about Cecilia, I do not think it would do for us to venture upon marrying yet. I know that you are willing to sacrifice everything, but I ought not on that account to accept a sacrifice. I could not bear to see you poor and uncomfortable; and we should be very poor in London now-a-days with such an income as we should have. If we were going to live here at Stratton perhaps we might manage, but I feel sure that it would be imprudent in London. You ought not to be angry with me for saying this, for I am quite as anxious to be with you as you can possibly be to be with me; only I can bear to look forward, and have a pleasure in feeling that all my happiness is to come. I know I am right in this. Do write me one little line to say that you are not angry with your little girl.

I shall be quite ready for you by the 29th. I got such a dear little note from Fanny the other day. She says that you never write to them, and she supposes that I have the advantage of all your energy in that way. I have told her that I do get a good deal. My brother writes to me very seldom, I know; and I get twenty letters from Cecilia for one scrap that Theodore ever sends me. Perhaps some of these days I shall be the chief correspondent with the rectory. Fanny told me all about the dresses, and I have my own quite ready. I've been bridesmaid to four of my own sisters, so I ought to know what I'm about. I'll never be bridesmaid to anybody again, after Fanny; but whom on earth shall I have for myself? I think we must wait till Cissy and Sophy are ready. Cissy wrote me word that you were a darling man. I don't know how much of that came directly from Cissy, or how much from Cecilia.

God bless you, dear, dearest Harry. Let me have one letter before you come to fetch me, and acknowledge that I am right, even if you say that I am disagreeable. Of course I like to think that you want to have me; but, you see, one has to pay the penalty of being civilized.—Ever and always your own affectionate

FLORENCE BURTON.

Harry Clavering was very angry when he got this letter. The primary cause of his anger was the fact that Florence should pretend to know what was better for him than he knew himself. If he was willing to encounter life in London on less than four hundred a year, surely she might be contented to try the same experiment. He did not for a moment suspect that she feared for herself, but he was indignant with her because of her fear for him. What right had she to accuse him of wanting to be comfortable? Had he not for her sake consented to be very uncomfortable at that old house at Stratton? Was he not willing to give up his fellowship, and the society of Lady Ongar, and everything else, for her sake? Had he not shown himself to be such a lover as there is not one in a hundred? And yet she wrote and told him that it wouldn't do for him to be poor and uncomfortable! After all that he had done in the world, after all that he had gone through, it would be odd if, at this time of day, he did not know what was good for himself! It was in that way that he regarded Florence's pertinacity.

He was rather unhappy at this period. It seemed to him that he was somewhat slighted on both sides,—or, if I may say so, less thought of on both sides than he deserved. Had Lady Ongar remained in town, as she ought to have done, he would have solaced himself, and at the same time have revenged himself upon Florence, by devoting some of his spare hours to that lady. It was Lady Ongar's sudden departure that had made him feel that he ought to rush at once into marriage. Now he had no consolation, except that of complaining to Mrs. Burton, and going frequently to the theatre. To Mrs. Burton he did complain a great deal, pulling her worsteds and threads about the while, sitting in idleness while she was working, just as Theodore Burton had predicted that he would do.

"I won't have you so idle, Harry," Mrs. Burton said to him one day. "You know you ought to be at your office now." It must be admitted on behalf of Harry Clavering, that they who liked him, especially women, were able to become intimate with him very easily. He had comfortable, homely ways about him, and did not habitually give himself airs. He had become quite domesticated at the Burtons' house during the ten weeks that he had been in London, and knew his way to Onslow Crescent almost too well. It may, perhaps, be surmised correctly that he would not have gone there so frequently if Mrs. Theodore Burton had been an ugly woman.

"It's all her fault," said he, continuing to snip a piece of worsted with a pair of scissors as he spoke. "She's too prudent by half."

"Poor Florence!"

"You can't but know that I should work three times as much if she had given me a different answer. It stands to reason any man would work under such circumstances as that. Not that I am idle, I believe. I do as much as any other man about the place."

"I won't have my worsted destroyed all the same. Theodore says that Florence is right."

"Of course he does; of course he'll say I'm wrong. I won't ask her again,—that's all."

"Oh, Harry! don't say that. You know you'll ask her. You would to-morrow, if she were here."

"You don't know me, Cecilia, or you would not say so. When I have made up my mind to a thing, I am generally firm about it. She said something about two years, and I will not say a word to alter that decision. If it be altered, it shall be altered by her."

In the meantime he punished Florence by sending her no special answer to her letter. He wrote to her as usual; but he made no reference to his last proposal, nor to her refusal. She had asked him to tell her that he was not angry, but he would tell her nothing of the kind. He told her when and where and how he would meet her, and convey her from Stratton to Clavering; gave her some account of a play he had seen; described a little dinner-party in Onslow Crescent; and told her a funny story about Mr. Walliker and the office at the Adelphi. But he said no word, even in rebuke, as to her decision about their marriage. He intended that this should be felt to be severe, and took pleasure in the pain that he would be giving. Florence, when she received her letter, knew that he was sore, and understood thoroughly the working of his mind. "I will comfort him when we are together," she said to herself. "I will make him reasonable when I see him." It was not the way in which he expected that his anger would be received.

One day on his return home he found a card on his table which surprised him very much. It contained a name but no address, but over the name there was a pencil memorandum, stating that the owner of the card would call again on his return to London after Easter. The name on the card was that of Count Pateroff. He remembered the name well as soon as he saw it, though he had never thought of it since the solitary occasion on which it had been mentioned to him. Count Pateroff was the man who had been Lord Ongar's friend, and respecting whom Lord Ongar had brought a false charge against his wife. Why should Count Pateroff call on him? Why was he in England? Whence had he learned the address in Bloomsbury Square? To that last question he had no difficulty in finding an answer. Of course he must have heard it from Lady Ongar. Count Pateroff had now left London! Had he gone to Ongar Park? Harry Clavering's mind was instantly filled with suspicion, and he became jealous in spite of Florence Burton. Could it be that Lady Ongar, not yet four months a widow, was receiving at her house in the country this man with whose name her own had been so fatally joined? If so, what could he think of such behaviour? He was very angry. He knew that he was angry, but he did not at all know that he was jealous. Was he not, by her own declaration to him, her only friend; and as such could he entertain such a suspicion without anger? "Her friend!" he said to himself. "Not if she has any dealings whatever with that man after what she has told me of him!" He

remembered at last that perhaps the count might not be at Ongar Park; but he must, at any rate, have had some dealing with Lady Ongar or he would not have known the address in Bloomsbury Square. "Count Pateroff!" he said, repeating the name, "I shouldn't wonder if I have to quarrel with that man." During the whole of that night he was thinking of Lady Ongar. As regarded himself, he knew that he had nothing to offer to Lady Ongar but a brotherly friendship; but, nevertheless, it was an injury to him that she should be acquainted intimately with any unmarried man but himself.

On the next day he was to go to Stratton, and in the morning a letter was brought to him by the postman; a letter, or rather a very short note. Guildford was the postmark, and he knew at once that it was from Lady Ongar.

DEAR MR. CLAVERING (the note said),—

I WAS SO SORRY to leave London without seeing you; I shall be back by the end of April, and am keeping on the same rooms. Come to me, if you can, on the evening of the 30th, after dinner. He at last bade Hermy to write and ask me to go to Clavering for the Easter week. Such a note! I'll show it to you when we meet. Of course I declined.

But I write on purpose to tell you that I have begged Count Pateroff to see you. I have not seen him, but I have had to write to him about things that happened in Florence. He has come to England chiefly with reference to the affairs of Lord Ongar. I want you to hear his story. As far as I have known him he is a truth-telling man, though I do not know that I am able to say much more in his favour.

Ever yours, J. O.

When he had read this he was quite an altered man. See Count Pateroff! Of course he would see him. What task could be more fitting for a friend than this, of seeing such a man under such circumstances. Before he left London he wrote a note for Count Pateroff, to be given to the count by the people at the lodgings should he call during Harry's absence from London. In this he explained that he would be at Clavering for a fortnight, but expressed himself ready to come up to London at a day's notice should Count Pateroff be necessitated again to leave London before the day named.

As he went about his business that day, and as he journeyed down to Stratton, he entertained much kinder ideas about Lady Ongar than he had previously done since seeing Count Pateroff's card.

Modern Geneva.

It is possible that Geneva may ere long become a sensitive point in European affairs. If we ask our readers to interest themselves in her politics it is because they represent the furthest advance of radicalism, and in her condition we can judge of some fruits of "red" government.

Geneva is now, as she has been for centuries, a centre of opposition to the past. From the time of the Albigensian persecution to the latest socialist plot, she has welcomed malcontents from neighbouring countries, and lent a willing ear to their revolutionary doctrines. No other population in Europe is like the mixed race of Geneva, recruited as it is at each outbreak of turbulent thought that troubles society.

The chief characteristic of the refugee people that has made Geneva its metropolis is its passionate intelligence. Intellectual action that is easily roused to practical violence marks the children of men who knew how to sacrifice country and home to an opinion. Nor is there the balance of other dispositions usually present in national life, to check the inherent tendencies of those French, and Italian, and German, and even English families who sought in the "Protestant Rome" a shelter for their political or religious discontent.

Such a refugee people is eager to welcome any leader that can guide its excess of mental energy. We know how Calvin curbed the free-thinkers that flocked to his model republic, and changed the "Liber-tines" of the town into Puritan dogmatizers of the strictest sort. The fervour of Rousseau was able to rouse his formalist fellow-tradesmen to study of the *Contrat Social*. The witty impiety and luxury of Voltaire were clumsily imitated by the richer burghers in the intervals of *prises d'armes* and political tempests in a teacup. The ideologues of the last century found in Geneva an anvil whereon to sharpen the weapons which afterwards routed the unprepared and contemptuous feudalisms.

We but remind our readers of the pet republic of the encyclopedists that they may understand the embarrassments of her citizens when 1815 and its restorations arrived. When the tide of French revolution had receded, they had to begin the world afresh with what remained to them of a dead past, and a keen sense of their actual destitution in the eyes of the neighbouring powers. Revolt from France was a new step for the Genevese who had long leant for support on their great neighbour; but they sued often and humbly to the allied sovereigns at Bâle for recognition in the new European family. They had become infected by English ideas during the Coppet opposition to Napoleon, and began to wish for our

institutions, which have proved as dangerous to them as to other races not of our kin.

Of their new protectors, Alexander was the most cordial, and he fed their ambition to become part of the Swiss Confederation. The interest taken by the Russian Emperor in the affairs of Geneva seems out of proportion to their apparent importance; but Russia has always concerned herself with the revolutionary strongholds that can weaken the power of her military rivals. Notwithstanding Alexander's supposed liberalism, we do not believe in the disinterestedness of his interference in Swiss politics.

By a decision of the Great Powers, Geneva gained admission to the Helvetic League, notwithstanding the allowable suspicion of the elder cantons. She is the chief town of the confederacy, but her contact has largely injured the ancient strength of Swiss patriotism, for she has proved herself more likely to involve her associates in troubles, foreign and intestine, than to yield them support, moral or military.

"Geneva! Geneva! One would think it was the fifth quarter of the globe," exclaimed a weary ambassador, when Pictet de Rochemont, the Genevese envoy, had at length wrung attention from the diplomatists assembled at Paris and Turin, and gained the recognition needed for his republic. The more far-sighted of the citizens disliked the additional territory added to their suburbs, but their Swiss confederates insisted on a new frontier that should secure their lines of defence. Several parishes, formerly Sardinian and French, were added to the new canton, and a cause for future trouble was ingenuously provided by Sardinia in the guarantees she required for the future of her ceded villages. It is significant that France objected to a large increase of territory for Geneva, and was supported by England and Austria, while Russia, with doubtful friendship, urged the enlargement of the little State. It is said that when Dumont, the foremost citizen of Geneva, observed to Talleyrand:—"Eh bien, vous nous avez donné les Catholiques," the French minister replied,— "Dites plutôt que nous vous avons donnés aux Catholiques." When diplomacy had done its work, and provided for Switzerland the doubtful good of guaranteed neutrality, there remained for Geneva the task of creating for herself a constitution. All the doctrinaires congregated on the shores of Lake Lemman assisted in the labour. The populace were docile, the time propitious, yet the scheme of government they drew was an acknowledged failure. Political perfection would seem sometimes to be more dangerous than political *laissez faire*. The good sense of some practical citizens was necessary to remedy the errors of the Coppet and Genevan purists, but it was not easy always to reconcile the rights of man with those of the Allied Powers, just then believed to be divine.

Meantime, with hopeful optimism, the chiefs of the new State declared that their theory of rule contained at least the germs of all desirable improvement. It was not, perhaps, displeasing to some who wished ill to

Republicanism, that the Genevese constitution also contained the germs of perpetual revolution. Twenty-five years, however, of political rest allowed such sweeping reforms in a radical sense, that the Genevese liberals were satisfied. The storms of 1830 swept by her and left her stationary, whether for good or evil, while the rest of Europe was shaken to its foundations. Yet, however pure a specimen of republican success, the city of Geneva at that time was backward in material improvements. Though it was constantly visited by travellers, and the resort of excellent society, the aspect of the place was not agreeable in its golden age of political excellence. The steamers which first brought visitors to the banks of the Rhone discovered their squalor. Strangers landed among indescribable nuisances. The houses of the Puritan town turned their worst sides to the beautiful Leman. The quays and hotels with which modern tourists are familiar, replace the horrors of town drains, decrepit fortifications, and the worst features of a river-port suburb. The traveller of thirty years ago struggled with difficulty from the marshy landing-place to a city where he found the population crowded within venerable but obsolete walls. The houses rose to a height only surpassed by those of the old town of Edinburgh. The purses as well as the prejudices of the house-proprietors would have suffered by the creation of agreeable suburbs. "The gradual progress based on their antecedents" of the ruling elders did not contemplate the developments of modern progress. Yet it is clear that the Genevese acquiesced in the action of their Government. Fewer and fewer electors troubled themselves to vote when there was occasion. The franchise, which is supposed so necessary to modern man, remained unsought by many of the townspeople, though it could be purchased by payment of two shillings and elevenpence. The benevolent aristocrats had almost a right to believe that no storm could stir the drowsy State. They did not imagine that a young member of one of the families received into their society had already laid a train for their overturn.

The life of James Fazy, since 1830, is the history of Geneva. He has known how to use for his personal ends the passionate restlessness of the Genevese character. A cold reception from the magnates "du haut," as the upper town is called, excited him to leave Geneva, and seek some mode of vengeance. He joined Carbonari and other secret societies, and became known as a writer in the French press. He was at the Hôtel de Ville of Paris in 1830, when the fate of France was being determined by a knot of journalists. Sitting round a table, they were about to choose from their number the chiefs of a provisional government, when by some chance M. Fazy was called away. Before his return his place was filled, and his chance of figuring in French politics was gone. The commercial system of Louis Philippe did not suit M. Fazy's violent projects. He returned to Geneva, and from his arrival dates the demoralization of the republic. Even if we credit him with the patriotism he noisily professes, M. Fazy could not have better served than he has done

the ends of Powers that dreaded the success of the doctrinaire republic as a dangerous example.

After 1830 a "red" press was established at Geneva, and presently the first outbreak of "red" sympathies occurred. A party of Polish adventurers, led by the notorious General Ramorino, attempted to make Geneva a base for their operations against the Sardinian Government. The conduct of the mob that fraternized with the revolutionary strangers revealed the disorder that had been fomented in the republic. The Government lost prestige, and the blouses discovered their divine right to insurrection. Almost at the same time a paper was started bearing the significant title of *L'Europe Centrale*, and which was the avowed organ of the "Universal Republicans." They had, under M. Fazy's guidance, chosen Geneva as their head-quarters.

No means were left untried to disturb the feelings of the people, and jealousy of sect and class was fomented until street meetings and public-house debates replaced a legitimate interest in the Representative Council. While radicalism held assemblies in the Place of the Molard, only one thousand and eighty-nine citizens out of four thousand five hundred and forty-two paid the low tax which gave them the right to vote in the Government elections. We need not number the many subjects of ingenious discontent that were made use of by the agitating clique. Every step taken by the Government, whether in paving a street or protecting Prince Louis Bonaparte, in the promulgation of a *fast*, or the re-arrangement of its Federal relations, was made a ground of complaint. The sympathy of the Conservatives with the Zurich dislike to Strauss's professorship was condemned by the sceptical mob not less than the stand made by the Protestants "*du haut*" against Catholic encroachment.

Still the Government remained stable, and the good sense of the Genevese long refused to listen to Mazzinian doctrines, or to be led by M. Fazy's unvarying eloquence. In 1833 the republic appeared so well ordered that Captain Basil Hall exclaimed at a public dinner, "that of all the countries he had seen, Geneva was the only one of which he desired to be a citizen." Before 1841, however, the radical leader had gained among his adherents many well-meaning citizens, who hardly knew under whose flag they had enlisted. One who figured in the revolutionary association known in Genevese history as "*du Trois Mars*," has since bitterly declared, "In that association we were all either hogs or geese. I confess I was amongst the geese." "*Malheureuse Genève*," exclaimed Sismondi, who lived to see his doctrinaire republic overturned by the efforts of the *Trois Mars*, "*au milieu de la prospérité la plus brillante tes enfants ont à plaisir semé les haines et ils recuilleront les calamités.*"

The story of events at Geneva on the 22nd of November, 1841, is an instance of the slight spark that suffices to explode the passions of a mob when a skilful demagogue undertakes the operation.

Some temporising reforms had been proposed in the Representative

Council, and before noon a mob nervously political had collected to hear the decision of the rulers. Regular to formality, however, the crowd dispersed to their mid-day dinner. Breathing time was thus given to the council, and if they had arrived at any decision, conciliatory or repressive Geneva might have maintained her respectability as a modern republic, but the doctrinaires could not stop theorizing. "Messieurs," exclaimed a member of the assembly, "nous sommes comme les Grecs du bas empire qui discutaient sur la grâce efficace pendant que les barbares étaient à leurs portes." The mob of eight or ten thousand returned along the steep streets which lead up to the town-hall, warmed by dinner and the 'petit blanc' dear to the Genevese workman. M. Fazy was at their head, and shouted, "On vous leurre, Genevois ; vous serez dupes comme vous l'êtes depuis vingt-cinq ans. Il faut que cette question soit finie aujourd'hui. La force est en vos mains. Demain peut-être il ne sera pas de même. L'occasion perdue ne se retrouve pas. Si dans un demi-heure les conseils n'ont pas voté nous monterons à la Maison de Ville."

The representatives informed of their danger, voted a constitutional assembly that could ratify the people's demands. "Qu'est-ce que la constituante ?" asked one of the disorderly insurgents when the resignation of the Government was announced. "C'est la femme du Président," answered a fellow blouse, who had probably come from some obscure village to swell the ranks of M. Fazy's mob.

Constitutional assemblies were an anachronism, however, in 1841, and the most extreme radical reforms, including universal suffrage, did not secure to M. Fazy the position he desired. "J'aime mes Genevois," he said to his friend, Eugene Sue, yet he evidently detested all that gave solidity to the state he professed to serve. He aimed at levelling the barriers that separated Geneva from the European masses. Her religious traditions, her decencies of life, her pride of intellect and contempt for material glitter, he determined to destroy. "On voudrait faire de Genève la plus petite des grandes villes," said the distinguished Professor de la Rive, during the first struggles between the old and new society ; "et pour moi je préfère qu'elle reste la plus grande des petites villes." Supported by the turbulent faubourg of St. Gervais, M. Fazy prepared new weapons of attack against the respectable quarters of the city. He found them not only in the petty squabbles of the townsfolk, but also in some Federal questions that just then agitated Switzerland.

The Roman Catholic citizens were irritated by the efforts of the elder Protestants to check their influence. The surviving politicians of 1815 remembered Talleyrand's warning when they admitted Savoyard villages to their state—"Messieurs de Genève," he said, "désenclavent leur territoire, et ne voient pas qu'ils enclavent leur religion." M. Fazy used the ready means of religious rancour to agitate the republic, and knew how to interest the mob in such alien questions as the suppression of convents in the distant canton of Argovie, or the residence of a Jesuit community at Lucerne.

How far the secret societies of which M. Fazy was an active member hurried the Federal events of 1846 and 1847, it would be hard to judge ; but the Swiss disturbances were the first drops of the storm that devastated Europe in the following year. The struggle of the Sonderbund and its result wrought speedy mischief among the adjoining populations, and earned for Switzerland much suspicion and dislike from her neighbours. The part taken in the short war of the " Separate League " by Geneva has some interest for us even now.

We suppose that few English Radicals would approve the action of the victorious cantons that were guilty, in their suppression of the rights of the Forest League, of the gross bullying that foreign democrats delight in. We cannot enter into the history of the armed opposition of the mountaineers to the incursions of the Radical free corps that swarmed into the fatherland of Furst and Tell from the towns of the plain. It so happened that the deciding vote on the legitimacy of their Sonderbund was to be given by the Genevese deputies. They asked for instructions from their grand council. It decided in favour of the freedom of the Forest cantons. Next day M. Fazy's paper, the *Revue de Genève*, appeared with a deep mourning border. He convoked a meeting in the open space round the church of St. Gervais. " Will you be hangers-on of the King of Sardinia ? " he cried. The angry exclamations of the mob satisfied him that the moment for insurrection had arrived. Rain coming on, he broke open the church doors, and from the clerk's desk finished his harangue. A protest against the decision of the Grand Council was prepared for transmission to the Federal Vorort, and the faubourg was prepared for defence against any Government interference. Warrants for the arrest of Fazy and two others were issued by the authorities to which the leaders of the insurrection refused obedience, and barricades were quickly erected by the St. Gervais mob to check the possible entry of any troops. After foolish though well-meant delay, the militia were ordered to destroy the barricades on the bridges ; but though a few Conservative officers led a forlorn hope gallantly into the heart of the faubourg, the lukewarm privates did not support them. They fell back under a severe fire to a little temporary hospital arranged for the wounded, on the Conservative side of the Rhone. The executive submitted to the faubourg, and next day the Molard was the scene of a popular meeting, first of the kind since Froment preached Reform in 1532. The sovereign people took M. Fazy's yoke upon them, and agreed to all his suggestions. A new constitution was invented on the spot, of which a notable feature was the centralization of power in the hands of a clique. In 1815 the Great Powers had objected to a numerous representation of the people. It remained for M. Fazy to carry out their wishes. He established, at Geneva, the system which, whether Imperial or Republican in title, is dangerous to freedom. He changed Geneva into a place of political rendezvous, and imposed on the city of Calvin a dictator whose very profession was lawlessness. We in England may wonder that, with his undoubted talent as a demagogue, M. Fazy should have remained

contented with the little field of Geneva when the platforms of 1848 might have been accessible to him; but Geneva is not an unimportant position. Count Nesselrode, writing in 1827 to the Russian envoy in Switzerland, desired him to observe that "Switzerland is the key of three great countries." In 1846, Geneva was the key of Switzerland.

Once M. Fazy, ex-editor of an obscure newspaper in Paris, had driven from the head of affairs the honest and educated men who had chiefly erred by their anxiety for the people's good, he used the laws and revenues as he chose. The events at Geneva were the preliminary exercise of that Republicanism which soon after swept over Europe. Among its earliest successes was the subjugation of the Forest cantons, that, until then, had preserved their independence. By the new Federal pact that followed, the Swiss government was greatly centralized. The vote of a popular assembly replaced the system by which, for any important Federal decision, a majority of three-fourths of the cantons was necessary. Popular assemblies are very manageable by dexterous agitators, and if "universal Republicanism" demanded war, Switzerland has become as likely a belligerent as any other State. It is even reported that a military spirit is being cultivated among her citizens, whether for purposes of future suicide, who can say? It is remarkable that M. Fazy has been foremost in promoting the changes that endanger Swiss neutrality and the safety of Geneva.

The first years of M. Fazy's dictatorship were noted for false promises to the classes that supported him. To fulfil their expectations of little work and much pay it was necessary to incur reckless debt. At the same time the passions of the working men were roused by such language as the following specimen, not disavowed by the Radical party:—

"Prolétaires, vous tous qui souffrez, serrez vos rangs, voici le bourgeois qui vient, armé de pied au cap, vous courir sus et vous égorger. Prolétaires, aux armes! Soignez votre fournement, munissez-vous de cartouches, et tenez-vous prêts!"

The ancient fortifications, regarded as sacred by the Conservatives, were given up to the picks and shovels of the "roughs," to whom the demolition was peculiarly satisfactory. The Savoy peasants were glad to pull down the walls that had kept them at bay in the ancient times. They did not equally value the free education offered to them. Whether or not the fault lay in the quality of the instruction provided for them, the proportion of children taught and the average of knowledge are less now than in 1841. Nor have the various financial enterprises of the Radical government been more successful—bankruptcy and disgrace have fallen upon most of M. Fazy's brilliant schemes. His admirers point to the material increase of the town, yet its development has been in spite of his mischief. Private wealth has built the new hotels and churches, and a French company rules the railway terminus. But the canton has sunk into debt larger in proportion than that of England. M. Fazy found a balance of four hundred thousand francs in the State coffers. There is

now a debt of twenty-five millions, and a yearly deficit of five or six hundred thousand francs.

The kingdom of prolétaires has ruined Geneva. "Partout où le peuple règne," announced M. Fazy, "on est labourieux et dissipé." This singular theory is realized in at least its second part. The shortest walk in modern Geneva will reveal to a visitor groups of the sovereign people tipsily glorifying themselves. "Protestant Rome," like the frog in the fable, struggles to become a "petit Paris." It is a Paris of blouses, for the respectable inhabitants preserve at least in form their traditions of decency, and eschew the flaming quays and dusty gardens created by the new government. "Calvin ne savait pas," writes M. Fazy in his *Précis de l'Histoire de Genève*, "que la plus haute moralité se trouve cachée sous cette apparence d'égoïsme et de frivolité." Nor have the Genevese "du haut" learnt yet this lesson. The ideas of M. Fazy have been chiefly developed by the swarming strangers, French, German, and Italian, who formed the standing army of their dictator. The appearance of Geneva is improved, it is true, by the levelling of the fortifications. It is now a handsome station for travellers, a convenient but very extortionate bazaar at the foot of the Alps for strangers to visit and leave. But material progress will not restore the character it is fast losing. The rendezvous of Red Republicans and foreign navvies will hardly replace the ancient city that was a point of light to those throughout Europe persecuted for conscience' sake.

We in England, who are used to think of Geneva as chiefly remarkable for its position in religious affairs, may be surprised that the institutions of Calvin did not more largely influence the recent revolutions in what was once his model theocracy. We need not remind our readers of the dogmatism which became formalism after the death of his successor, Theodore of Beza, or of the reaction which made Geneva in the last century a teacher of "natural" religion as understood by the French encyclopedists. We are most of us familiar with the squabbles of Voltaire and Rousseau, who hoped his native republic would verify his visions of a world, perfect, if "le bon Dieu" did not interfere. Even when the storm of 1794 and the French occupation that followed had passed away, there yet remained some dry bones of Calvin's ecclesiastical system. On the lifeless skeleton was set up a church in 1815 that was welcomed by the Genevese for its traditionary respectability. But a spirit of religious democracy was at work, to which the Genevese Consistory offered a foolish resistance. It issued an unfortunate decree, which forbade the expression of some of the most important Christian dogmas from the town pulpits. Several theological students, who were admirers of English Methodism, immediately separated from the established Church, and a "revival," led by Messieurs Drummond and Halldane, took place, which at first was tinged by the mysticism of Madame Krudener, the celebrated Egeria of the Russian Emperor. There was good reason for protest against the narrow scepticism of the "Venerable Company of Genevan Pastors,"

and a free Church, strong in the profession of Calvinist orthodoxy gradually made good its position, and preached successfully the individualism which must accompany the early stages of dissent. The names of Gaussen and Merle d'Aubigné are popular among English evangelicals; and some years ago Malan, Felix Neff, Pyt, and their fellow pastors were heroes in the minds of our Low Church enthusiasts. Political antipathies made the "Mômiers," as the dissenters were called, distasteful to the Genevese Conservatives, until they won for themselves a power that usurped the sceptre once wielded over Continental Protestantism by the "venerable company." The various shades of opinion which exist between the communion of Plymouth Brethren and the stern Calvinism of Malan gathered into the present *Eglise Libre*. Though the organic differences of the Free and State churches are in curious contrast, they now work smoothly together. Both keep aloof from the operations of the Radical party, yet it is plain that the individualist principle in a religious community corresponds to radicalism in politics. It has been strictly controlled in the Free church by orthodoxy of creed, but the theory of equality of grace has contributed indirectly to the craving for other equality in Radical Geneva. In 1846 the old establishment was declared defunct by M. Fazy, without much opposition from its children. In the new Grand Council, of which he was the master, he said, "Nous voici aux chapitres des cultes. C'est toujours un sujet bien délicat, et nous avons vivement regretté de ne pouvoir l'effacer de notre constitution pour l'abandonner à la pure et simple direction des hommes religieux de tous les cultes." The dictator of Geneva was right in disclaiming piety for his colleagues. It seemed the moment for a separation of church and state; but in that case the Church of Rome, backed by foreign guarantee, must have become the ruling power in ecclesiastical affairs. It was then beginning to command a strong minority that has since proved a majority of the gross population of the canton. A commission appointed by the Grand Council hastily trenched all sectarian difficulties. It opened wide the doors of the new church when it declared as the distinguishing "note" of "l'Eglise nationale Protestante, qu'elle se compose de tous les Genevois qui acceptent les formes organiques de cette Eglise telles qu'elles sont instituées ci-après." The election of its authorities, lay and clerical, was based on universal suffrage. The present Church of Geneva is probably the most liberal specimen of multitudinism that Christendom has yet seen. Much prudence has been as yet shown by its administrators, but probably few Englishmen would be prepared to accept its breadth, or rather absence of doctrine, as their example.

Of the eighty-three articles drawn up by the first Consistory elected under the new system, one only is devoted to the profession of any dogma, if assertion of the divine inspiration of the Bible can be called a dogma when the interpretation of Scripture is unfettered. Nor is the church thus founded on the popular vote bound by its own decrees. Public

pressure might make it again Socinian, as it is just now inclining it to evangelical orthodoxy. It is a society for teaching, within which every shade of belief is admissible, and no union except that of temporal citizenship is required among its adherents. Progress may become as powerful a cry in the Consistory as it has been in the State Council, and we may be prepared for all that is strangest in the restless population trained by M. Fazy. Popular passion has not been lately excited on religious questions; but if they should become useful as spurs in the hands of the Radical leaders, we cannot expect any other result than that the loosely-built State Church should be replaced by the organized power of Rome. Last year a bishop was consecrated by the Pope as auxiliary in Geneva, as if in readiness for the day when Calvin's city shall return to its old allegiance. Monseigneur Mermillod, a native of his new bishopric, is carefully liberal in his praise of "progress," as becomes a successful man. For the reconquest of Geneva seems certain when we hear that its Roman Catholic population, which even during the French occupation before 1815 numbered barely two thousand five hundred souls, now amounts to over forty-two thousand, while the Protestants of all sorts only muster forty thousand of the whole population of the canton.

The change in the relative positions of the Roman and Genevan Churches is M. Fazy's undoubted work. He used Protestantism to crush the Forest cantons, who had not had the advantage of reading Eugene Sue's *Juif Errant*, and were in 1816 tolerant of Jesuits. But when in power M. Fazy petted the Savoyard and French peasants, who formed his political reserve, and enabled him to overawe the aristocrats "du haut," and though the Radical government boasted their irreligion they countenanced the steady advance of Romanism. The Catholic Church is now the only breakwater at Geneva against utter licence of rationalism; for among even the theological students are many who shrug their shoulders at creeds, and profess no faith more stable than the sentimental individualism of Rêville and Scherer. They will be the future preachers of Protestantism throughout Europe, for Geneva is the chief seminary of the French Reformed churches. Are our readers familiar with the charming writings of M. Scherer, the chief, though widely divergent disciple of Vinet of Lausanne? Sixteen years ago he held a professorship in the Oratoire at Geneva, the centre of orthodox Calvinism. There he elaborated the thoughts which carried individualism not only into the forms, but into the dogmas of theology. His influence is too important on modern Protestantism to be hastily examined, but we quote a sentence that indicates how far this excellent and amiable man has departed from his early convictions. "Le Biblicisme," he declares, "n'est pas seulement une erreur théologique, mais aussi et surtout un fléau pour l'Eglise." M. Scherer has carried with him many sincere minds and earnest hearts. After sixteen years of advance in his career, his criticism seems to become more and more destructive, and to use his own words,

"un doute succède à un autre doute comme la vague à la vague." "Il y a," he writes again, "dans les choses humaines une certaine pente qu'on ne remonte pas." Sad testimony from one of the most earnest and candid among the destroyers of the past! His words seem of special application to the Geneva which by many ties, though not by that of birth, claims him for her own.

The unchecked triumph of M. Fazy which silenced the educated and richer classes at Geneva, and which reduced the Conservative minority in the Grand Conseil occasionally to one dissident, was dangerous in its completeness. The seven rulers of the executive were unfettered by any external authority, for "public opinion" had been effectually muzzled by an ubiquitous press, and was checked in any revival by judicious sops, and even by repression worthy of the Stuart Star Chamber. The upper class withdrew to their country-houses, and to the half-dozen streets where they congregate in the upper town. They looked on silently at the wasteful and gaudy changes going on below, carefully excluding from their society all of opinions even tinged with Fazyism. They no longer offered the same welcome to the foreigners whom they had once been pleased to see in their town. They have been blamed for their inertness, but in truth it is difficult for any but Radical governments to succeed in any canton while the existing Federal system gives such facility for political intrigue. The good sense and disinterestedness of a whole class is as nothing, when some tavern orator rouses those passions which have been fostered by the Radical leaders. They have become, to quote a distinguished Genevese, M. Ernest Naville, "une flamme obscure qui dévore la république." M. Fazy has lost influence; he may fail, as in the attempt to raise insurrection at Thonon in 1860, on the occasion of the French annexation, but the evils he has created live after him, nor is it easy to see a prosperous issue for the republic while her present constitution exists. Every year Geneva is distracted by elections that seem chiefly profitable to a clique of journalists and government agents. The legislative and executive councils are chosen in alternate years, so as to multiply the orgies during which the sovereign people declares its will.

A political sketch by M. Ernest Naville of the results in Geneva of radicalism, contains the following description of an election, that may interest those who think we in England need violent changes in our system. "L'élection approche. On rassemble les cercles de la ville; on passe de grandes revues dans les assemblées populaires: en même temps on court les campagnes. On sème les défiances; on cultive avec amour tous les genres de division. D'un sillon on fait un fossé: on s'efforce de le creuser en abîme. On exploite les moindres incidents; on fait appel à tous les intérêts, à toutes les passions. Des affiches incandescentes couvrent les murs; les journalistes embouchent leurs plus grosses trompettes, et sonnent la charge du combat. C'est alors que se font de larges plaies au corps social. Alors la religion, privée de son caractère auguste, figure dans les manœuvres électorales,

et perd avec sa dignité l'influence salutaire qu'elle doit exercer sur les âmes. La bataille électorale se livre enfin. On entend parler de fraudes et de violences. Un parti l'emporte, et dans une procession triomphale la moitié du peuple se réjouit de ce que l'autre moitié du peuple a été privée de ses droits ! Chaque année nos élections rechauffent les germes de l'anarchie politique, et ébranlent les bases de l'ordre social. Chaque année nous immolons sur l'autel des partis les intérêts de la patrie.

"C'est ainsi périssent les républiques ! Si un malheur national nous arrivait, si nous finissions par perdre une indépendance compromise par nos fautes, les étrangers diraient ce que nous dirons aussi dans nos moments de calme,— 'Il était facile de le prévoir.' Ce serait là l'oraison funèbre que prononcerait l'Europe aux funérailles de la vieille république de Genève."

Though the upper classes stand aloof from the unsavoury pit of Genevese politics, an opposition to the Fazy system has been gradually formed by the middle ranks, who distrust his honesty in money matters, and dread his foreign friends, whether Imperial or Mazzinian ; who do not see with satisfaction his conferences with Prince Napoleon and Prince Gortschakoff, or his hurried journeys to the Tuileries. It would be hard to exaggerate the practice of alternate coercion and bribery that, until last November, secured the Fazy government a narrow majority. For some time the opposition were impotently furious, and every variety of electioneering corruption has been used in the model republic that was to be the first stone of the "universal" edifice. Radical agapes were held by the disturbed executive of Geneva, which by one or two of its members declared to its drunken admirers, that the upper class, no longer the docile "vache à lait" of the workmen, must disappear. Notwithstanding the violent declamation of the government, the people began to see that they were being cheated and sold. "The blind instinct of the people," though certainly very blind at Geneva, was roused by a significant fact, that will help to illustrate the nature of the Fazy rule.

This tribune of the people, whose private life requires liberal expenditure, had let a floor of his house for gaming purposes. But all gaming establishments are strictly forbidden by Swiss law, and as the "Palais Fazy" was built on ground that a grateful people had given to their benefactor, the offence was especially flagrant. Only the dictator's countenance could shield the owner of the "cercle des étrangers." In return a large proportion of the earnings from *Trente et quarante* was paid to treat the sovereign mob at election times, and assist the return of M. Fazy's officials. But in August, 1864, the efforts of the Radical government, not only to keep office, but to prevent the intrusion even of one stranger into their council of seven, were at last unsuccessful by any means short of a *coup-d'état*. Robbery had recourse for protection to assassination. It was startling to see in *The Times*, a telegram announcing an insurrection at Geneva,—intelligent and liberal Geneva, where every wish of an aspiring democracy was gratified. The insurrection at Geneva, however,

would not interest us as much as a railway accident at home, if the events there had not betrayed a rottenness that concerns all the friends of European peace. As the English and French press were not particularly accurate in their account of the event, it is, perhaps, worth while to sketch it correctly, however slightly.

On Sunday, the 21st of August, 1864, an election became necessary to replace one of the seven *conseillers d'état* who form the executive of Geneva. M. Challet Venel had been promoted to the Federal Council at Berne, and a new finance minister was required in his room. The Radical party proposed M. Fazy. The Independents offered to agree to any compromise short of his nomination, but the great man wished to resume his manipulation of the public accounts. The Radical clique persisted in his candidature.

The votes of the people were given with tolerable calm, and next morning the usual jury of twenty-seven citizens proceeded to examine the poll. The duty of this jury is simply to declare the result of the voting. The subsequent validation or invalidation of the election is supposed to remain with the Grand Council, but there are many convenient uncertainties in the Genevese constitution. As it happened, seventeen of the twenty-seven examining jury were Fazyists. At half-past ten on Monday the 22nd, a rumour issued from the electoral building that M. Fazy was in a majority. The government was in ecstasies. Two of its members embraced publicly in a café, and thanked Heaven that they lived in the most perfect of republics. An hour later, however, it was announced to the rival forces of the Radicals and Independents, that the opposition candidate Chenevière had a majority of 337. The spirits of the executive again revived, when, on a pretext since acknowledged futile, the jury, headed by a personal friend of M. Fazy's, took on itself to declare the election void. The part in the day's work taken by this friend, M. John Perrier, is noteworthy, if we couple it with his leadership of the revolutionary expedition to Thonon in 1860, when a rout of Genevese roughs, armed from the government arsenal, attempted to excite the Savoy town against the French annexation. On that occasion, M. Perrier must have deserved well of the authorities, if we may judge of the impunity he has enjoyed both from Federal and cantonal justice.

Immediately on the publication of the act of the grand bureau, which was in fact a *coup-d'état*, several Radical agents hurried to the faubourg of St. Gervais, where already it had been muttered that if Fazy were not returned, tears of blood would be shed. The Independent electors hastily assembled in the place of the Molard. Carrying with them a copy of the electoral law, they went up to the town-hall to demand from the Council of State a declaration of the true result of the voting, and the majority for Chenevière.

The council excused itself at first, and pleaded that it could not interfere with the act of the jury. The Independents grew angry, swore a good deal, and swarmed noisily round the room, where the

Radical executive were sitting. No violence, except of language, was used. It was finally agreed by the council that a proclamation should be issued simply to declare the majority for Chenevière, and to promise that the jury which had nullified the election should be convoked for further deliberation.

It is at Geneva an ancient and usual custom to make such a proclamation public through the town, and to accompany the criers by a procession of those citizens interested in it. To give the act of the government a more solemn force, a crowd of Independents accompanied the officials who were to announce it. The State Council remained free and tranquil in their chairs at the town-hall, and the upper town was in a repose so complete, that a tourist, ignorant of any turmoil, strolled about it spyglass and *Murray* in hand. The Independents had all gone on the walk that cost some of them so dear. Perfectly unarmed and in careful order they paraded the principal streets in a column, that was mockingly called "*l'insurrection en promenade*."

Meantime a hasty note had been sent by one of the State Councillors at the town-hall to the faubourg. Its contents have remained a mystery, but M. Fazy was seen to come and go between the newspaper offices and public places of his favourite quarter. His government had established (no one knows why) a second arsenal in the faubourg. It was allowed to be pillaged of ball cartridge; and even cannon were drawn out, so as to command the bridges by which the Independents were rashly advancing into the Radical stronghold.

It is significant that while the Independents were starting on their procession, and while they were still in orderly and peaceful array, a telegram was sent to Berne, accusing them of having already taken up arms at the Molard. False witness was thus ingeniously prepared to show that they were the aggressors, and the action that M. Fazy had planned was beforehand attributed to his political enemies.

The assassinations that took place afterwards were not perpetrated by the masses of the faubourg. They looked on ignorantly while some forty men posted themselves in readiness to attack the Independent column. The fighting did not in any way represent even the passions of the Radicals, but had all the characteristics of a pre-arranged plot, to be executed by a few hired bravos. Ten or twelve of the conspirators seem to have been enough to check the Independent procession at the first point of its arrest. At a given moment, to the amazement of the citizens, balls rattled against the houses that overlooked the serried march of Chenevière's supporters, and blood flowed on the pavement. The revolutionists who had fired the volley stood aside and showed to the stricken column four, or, as some say, six, cannon pointed at them. The guns were heavily charged with grapeshot, and we can hardly over-estimate the bloodshed that was imminent when a bystander, with rare patriotism, flung himself before the muzzle of one, and startled into delay the fellow whose hand was raised to fire it. The second gun, by an accident, missed fire. The sweeping

murder that would probably have entailed the destruction of the republic was momentarily averted. But, as it was, several citizens fell dead and wounded, the procession broke, and its members rushed back in frantic indignation to the arsenal in the upper town, to seek for arms to defend themselves. It seemed as if the government had almost wished to encourage their revengeful impulse, for the arsenal was left in charge only of two policemen, who were of course powerless against the wave that surged up the narrow streets of the old city. The magazine was instantly pillaged, but there were in it no cartridges. So far the Council of State, sitting in the neighbouring town-hall, had provided for its own safety. Though urgently warned of the imminence of civil war, the executive left the passions of the rival parties to their unrestrained violence. Only late in the afternoon would they, at the instance of an Independent, send for the militia, who were encamped for their yearly training about two miles from the town. The government had not even an available drum to beat the *générale*. Had M. Fazy planned a battle so sanguinary that French troops from Gex or Annecy could alone have saved the town?

The Independents, however, in their hour of trial showed a patriotism which averted further danger. "There is enough blood shed," said one of their leaders to the State Council, whom they had shut up in the town-hall. "We keep you as hostages." The measures taken to restore order were prompted by them, but the action of the Radical executive, though watched, was left free. At last the militia arrived, the State Council pledged their words for the disarming of the faubourg, and the Independents dispersed, content to leave their cause, and the punishment of the Fazy street-assassins, to the Federal authorities.

The council at Berne had been early informed by telegraph of the barricades and the attitude of the faubourg. Before morning, two thousand Vaudois marched in to preserve order. The Federal flag floated from the hotel of the commissioners sent to investigate the affair, and Geneva was bitted for the time. For six months the town was occupied by a considerable Federal force, at an expense to it of five hundred thousand francs. The lesson would have been severe had it not been neutralized by ingenious intrigue—M. Fazy, who had arrived from Paris the day before the election, retreated to French territory after the events of the 22nd of August. From the frontier town of Gex, he announced that he was keeping watch on the Conservative reaction; with the indifference of a man who has in keeping many secrets, and possesses impunity, he refused to answer the summons of the Federal commissioner. Nor were the seventeen originators of the *coup-d'état*, the Radical jury who declared M. Chenevière's election void, disturbed by the Federal prosecution. It is said that M. Fazy possessed papers that seriously compromised the Bernese government in the affair of Thonon, hence his safety and the indemnity of his faction.

By a legal evasion there was complete failure of justice in the trial

of the assassins who thus shot down peaceful citizens in the open streets. The Federal assize, held in the following December, was a solemn farce. Some scapegoats were tried, not for the crime of murder that had been committed, but for the political offence of impeding the executive in an official act. After a ponderous display of impartiality, and with much speechifying on every side, the prisoners were acquitted. The political parties at Geneva were indifferent to the result; yet the result, in the eyes of Europe, means that in Switzerland, and particularly at Geneva, there can be contrived impunity for crimes that unscrupulous demagogues may instigate. There is no legal check on any convulsion that may be planned. The constitution of the canton provides no punishment for political offences, while the Federal authorities are powerless to interfere in criminal cases.

Though conservatism or reaction be impossible at Geneva, its citizens would ill deserve their reputation for intelligence if they had not attempted some opposition to the "system" that has culminated in such an outrage. The state of the republic's finances required investigation. "Hands have been very free with the State chest," a Radical official publicly admitted, in a late examination of some fraud. High functionaries have been convicted of habitual stealing. There has been a system of open accounts and extraordinary budgets by which money disappeared without remedy. M. Fazy's great work, the levelling of the fortifications, was a heading for all unaccounted deficits. "Excellence, où porterons-nous cette somme?" became a formula in any difficulty. "Au nivellement," replied the chief, and so all discrepancies were levelled.

It had long been a surprise to the increasing party of Independents that they could not command a majority in the elections. It was felt that there was trickery somewhere. And trickery was easy by the Radical elective system. The Fazy organization almost destroyed any power of choice for the individual elector. No obedient tenants were ever led to the poll in England more despotically than the voters at Geneva. The elector was, and is obliged to vote for his representatives, not individually, but in a mass. There are, for instance, forty-three members of the Great Council returned by the electoral college of the city. A list of names is prepared by the chiefs of the rival parties. The elector probably never heard of some among them, nor cares to inquire into the antecedents of others on the list presented to him; but he must accept it, or become an enemy, or resign his electoral right. The lists are arranged in ingenious combinations to secure party success, and with little regard to the return of really good representatives. So long as pink or blue triumphs, a fiction is content and the mob cheers. The people's real wishes are not even consulted by the rival cliques of newspaper editors and place-hunters. It has been found by recent investigation, that to strengthen itself, the Fazy government fabricated 3,000 votes, the gross number of electors being about 12,000.

Meantime, the quiet but stern protest made by the superior classes at

Geneva against the acts of their rulers was very decided. Without one exception, the old Conservative families of the town have held aloof from even casual acquaintance with the Fazy clique. Not one of his colleagues has ever been seen in a salon "du haut." The Geneva of the De la Rives, the De Candolles, the De Saussures, cannot easily be destroyed or annexed. It will, for the present at least, preserve its traditions, though a French prefect govern in place of M. Fazy, and Monseigneur Mermillod preach from the pulpit of Calvin. Since 1848, the Genevese gentry have enjoyed a learned leisure. To an Englishman, whose manner of life is different, the pedantry of their society is half ridiculous, both in its shortcomings and its assumptions. It really possesses many members of European reputation, and is not unlike a scientific and literary congress in its rejection of the usual social frivolities. It affects extreme refinement and exclusivism. If its members, in sheer recoil from the intellectual austerity of its manners, wish to amuse themselves, they go to other countries; but gossip remains to the "précieux" and "précieuses" of the place as a pleasure more valuable from the absence of any other. There is no hunting, shooting, or other healthy exercise for men, and still less for the womenkind "du haut." Enterprising youths stalk a rare woodcock now and then with triumph, or ride in strings along a dusty road. "We seldom use open carriages," observed a boy of twenty. "It is too cold in winter, and there is dew on summer evenings." Yet the Genevese are not effeminate; perhaps the bitter north wind that sweeps down their cold blue lake keeps their energy alive. The strength of the Genevese is, however, rather intellectual than physical. A continual exercise of the brain is customary even for young men of large fortune. There is a standard of perfection among the travelled and cosmopolitan connoisseurs of Geneva, so high that enthusiasm is checked and art is stunted for lack of frank and instinctive sympathy. The Genevese know too much to feel the influence of art. They are too omniscient for any play of the imagination, and no one ever heard of a Genevese poet, whether mute or vocal. The theatres are abandoned to strangers and Radicals, and the rare concerts are devoted to learned execution of music that belongs chiefly to the distant past or to the dim future. Local painters are less trammelled than musicians by their public, and they can send their pictures to other exhibitions than the little salon of Geneva. The "cold shade" of the aristocracy of pure reason need not prevent their working for Paris and Turin. Twenty years ago, the Genevese connoisseurs hoped that they possessed a school of painting that should still further spread the glories of their new Athens. But the painters of their school never got much further than the rock and fir-tree, which its founder, Calame, had immortalized. It is true that the residence of Calame, native as he was of Vaud, gave some respectability to the drawing-masters of Geneva, though in the higher order of artists to whom our Constables, and Gainsboroughs, and Turners belong, he takes a low place. Calame is better known in Russia and Germany than in England, yet he is worthy of sympathy from the nation that first started an

Alpine club. He supplied a want felt some twenty years ago even more than at present, for about that time the higher Alps first began to be generally objects of admiration rather than of terror. He was the first accurate student of the perpetual snows and higher mountain forms. Calame has been condemned by French critics for attempting to interpret the sublime and stern aspects of the upper ranges—yet he rendered at least one or two of the impressions they excite. Perhaps an artist endowed with a power yet unknown, may some day show us the glory of those summits that even by their admirers are hardly understood. Though their rendering by Calame wants poetry, his drawing is good of the *névé* slopes and ruinous *aiguilles* of Swiss scenery. His picture of the Handeck Falls, in the *Musée Rath* at Geneva, is courageous in its faithful rendering of Alpine savageness. His paintings of Mont Blanc and Monte Rosa treat the tenderly keen summits with firmness. Several of his disciples have established themselves at Geneva, and perpetuate his favourite subjects, but he was not a master capable of founding a school. Nor is the intellectual republic a place where art can thrive, except in the persons of the numerous professors of drawing attracted by its swarms of schools and private tutors. The few good painters who happen to reside at Geneva, among whom rank first, Van Muyden, Humbert, Castan, Duval, and Hornung, exhibit in the *Paris salons*, and rely on foreign appreciation, careless of home criticism. One remarkable student of glacier colour and form passes his winters at Geneva—his summers at Chamouny. We think the name of Loppé will ere long be better known in England than it is yet. Though we are not forgetful of the eccentric efforts of Mr. Elijah Walton and others of our ubiquitous artists, to represent in the glaring style popular in England, the sublimity of the higher Alps, we think M. Loppé is the first conscientious painter who has grappled with their truths. He has had strength of body and energy of will to study for weeks among the higher slopes of the Alps. By careful and prolonged labour, he has caught the real sentiment of the glacier world as it is seen in the rugged yet viscous fall of the ice-rivers, and the unearthly, deathful beauty of the scarcely-trodden snow valleys. He admits the public to some of the sensations that are felt in the great workshops whence flow the rivers of Europe, and where the soil of the plains is prepared for the use of the living things below. He avoids the mountain panoramas which are outside the limits of art, and he has chosen rather to give realistic details of mountain form. Our readers will recognize in this sobriety of choice and faith, in the beauty of simple truth, one of the best characteristics of French art as opposed to the gaudy trickery of our English school of landscape.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the activity of the little republic in science if she is deficient in art. She has rendered many services to society in its practical improvements. The first experiment in the penitentiary discipline, which has become general in Europe, was tried by her ; the latest effort to lessen the suffering caused by war originated at

Geneva, when two years ago the Great Powers held there a conference for organizing neutral ambulances and licensed military nurses, and one by one agreed to the Genevese propositions. Two hundred and twenty societies for benevolent purposes work with feverish energy in the little State. There is in it an eagerness for knowledge unusual elsewhere, even in our time. A fresh idea, no matter what may be its parentage, is caught up by the fine ladies equally as by the professors "du haut." It is assimilated or rejected with a rapidity that our English temper cannot follow.

The traditions to which the older families still cling, prevent display of the wealth which is abundant, and for the most part safely invested in foreign stock. There is pedantic affectation of contempt for mere money. A Rothschild or a Demidoff may establish themselves by the gates of the Genevese aristocrats without welcome; kings and princes, unless in some way distinguished, are hardly reckoned the equals of the chiefs of "la société;" but they will receive a rising writer or a scientific celebrity to their intimacy. Notwithstanding the disagreeable pretension of Genevese manners, we must respect the stand made by the upper classes against the vulgar materialism of modern society and its various flunkeyisms. There are faults in the splendours of London and Paris more serious than the shabbiness and affectation of the Genevese "perruques." "Monsieur," said, in the last century, the chief magistrate of the republic to the gorgeous representative of the French king, who called pompously for "the people" of his guest, "Ne vous donnez pas tant de peine, tous mes gens ce sont ma Jeanne," and he pointed to the little maid who carried his lantern. Somewhat of this simplicity remains in the usages "du haut." Hardly a private carriage is to be met, and certainly none that are well appointed, in the streets of Geneva. Liveries are seldom allowed even in the houses of rich men, and an English groom or footman in the streets has to stand a good deal of insolence from the blouses who look on the most respectable servants as their inferiors. It would also appear that ornament is as much despised by some of the modern Puritans of the city as in the days when their ancestors were restricted in the amplitude of their apparel and the fashion of their feasts. There is singular lack of beauty among the savants and savantes, and the squareness and stiffness of their temper might be expressed in their forms. Grace is rare in a race that values it so slightly, and quiet ugliness is stamped on all things new and old. The womanliness of women is less esteemed than their wit. The domestic interests of the household, the affectionate care of an English mother, seem contemptible to these miniature De Staëls and Du Defunds. No models can painters find in the Genevese population. No gleams of pleasant colour greet the eye as a stranger strolls along the tawdry quays and plaster streets of M. Fazy's creation, but of intellect the very air seems full. The beautiful public buildings meet the eye at every corner. Conservatoire, atheneums, museums, libraries, establishments for promoting omniscience, have been provided by rich citizens.

Every creed of Christendom is represented, from the glittering Greek church that rises hard by the old cathedral, to the towers of the new Notre Dame de Genève. The Freemasons' Hall has its Greek oblong by the Byzantine Jewish Synagogue. It is said that pure rationalism becomes sectarian and propagandist at Geneva. Mormonism, spiritualism, and other heathenisms are not unrepresented in the town that listens with approval by turns to the orthodoxy of Merle d'Aubigne and the Darwinism of Professor Vogt. The people are proud of their eclecticism. They affect to esteem England, though with well-founded suspicion of her diplomacy. As befits the Latin mind, they have civil contempt for German confusions. They receive Russians, Greeks, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, as Solomon might have done the apes and peacocks of the South. The English colony lives apart, indifferent to any but the politics expounded in *The Times*, and too constant to their church, well served as it is by its present chaplain, to care for the ecclesiastical wars of Geneva. And what have we to do, after all, with the small canker of Geneva in the European world? Yet it may be, after all, the "speck in garnered fruit" which may seriously trouble future diplomacy.

Geneva is a town of only forty thousand inhabitants. We shall not be accused of exaggerating its intellectual pre-eminence when we remind our readers that from its training have issued the chiefs of French Protestantism in both extremes of Calvinism and rationalism. Much that we enjoy most in the best French literature is from Genevese writers, whose nationality is lost in the Paris vortex. We need not remind our readers of Merle d'Aubigne, Gaussen, and Bungener, dear to Protestant tastes. Topffer in his Messrs. Vieuxbois, Jabot and their brothers perhaps originated the quaint histories of Mr. Pips and others beloved in our drawing-rooms. It is useless cataloguing names celebrated as are the De la Rives, De Candolles, and Pictets; and the best Genevese writers find translators in England. We believe even Madame de Gasparin's somewhat breathless utterances go through more than one edition among our sentimentalists of the evangelical school.

In the character of the educated class of Geneva is her strength. The present Federal pact of Switzerland may fall to pieces. The ancient tradition of France, that the Helvetic confederacy is necessary on her least defended frontier, may be abandoned by the Emperor, and Geneva may be annexed, to the injury rather than to the aggrandizement of his country; but after six centuries of standard-bearing in the army of reformers, the educated Genevese must not abandon their post lightly. The little republic may have a difficult task in avoiding total destruction, for Montesquieu's saying, "*Les hommes font les institutions qui font les hommes*," is evidenced by the general abasement of her citizens, since the constitution of 1846. Everything is done, not for and by the people, but for and by a succession of cliques, of whom the chiefs do not always seem perfectly loyal to their city. The constitution imposed on Geneva by the "able editors" trained in France, is a nest of disputes. The support of

the alien Swiss cantons is not much looked for, in the event of fresh disturbances. "Those fools of confederates," exclaims M. Fazy, "are behind the age!" The Radical demagogue has trained his followers to dislike the interference of Berne.

What future remains for the ancient republic? From the day that she became a political agent, she has been in danger. Political fever has exhausted her strength. In her delirium, we find her dreaming with the rest of Switzerland of a marine! That will, we presume, involve marine neutrality and marine guarantees, and even more dangerous diplomacy than that forced on her by the treaties of 1815.

The presence of the notorious Russian incendiary Herten and his paper, the *Kolokol*, still further increases the responsibilities of Geneva. She is a piece of tinder ready for a spark. We trust it may not ignite Europe, as a lucifer-match may set on fire a timber-yard. Even the Pope, the last Conservative prince in Europe, has no reason to rejoice in the advance at Geneva of the Roman Catholic creed. Extreme demoralisation has accompanied the success of the Ultramontane agents. "Vous allez voir," said an elderly Savoyard curé, "à supposer que nous prenions Genève, que le siège nous aura coûté vingt mille âmes." Switzerland might make a gallant defence against the open attacks of her neighbours. She will find it hard to resist the destruction lately introduced by "red" theories, when Furst is replaced by Ochsenbein, and Calvin by Fazy. Yet Switzerland is important to European balance, and Geneva is the weak point of Switzerland. We trust the final blow may not be struck at her ancient liberties under pretence of "non-intervention," such as that which in 1846 betrayed the foreign cantons. "Non-intervention," said Talleyland, "is much the same as intervention!"

Superior Information.

I WAS once spinning a bait for pike in a small but well-stocked river in Northamptonshire, and I had just taken the bait-fish in my hand to adjust the hooks, when a friend who considered me learned in matters of sporting and natural history, said suddenly—"Pray, what are those little black things floating on the water, shooting about in circles, the size of a split pea, there by the side of the stream?" He meant the whirligig, *Gyrinus Natator*.

For my own part, I had not the faintest notion at that time, what the creatures were called. I have of course taken pains to find out before venturing to write this article. But I was pre-occupied then; I was thinking of the bait, and whether it was any good trying that hole down by the little waterfall where I had a shady sort of a run yesterday; and so I only answered, "Oh, those are little black things that float on the water."

"Thank you!" said he. It occurred to him, ~~perhaps~~, that he had told me as much when he asked the question. And yet, in my abstraction, I no doubt fancied that I had fully satisfied him. The "little black things" are common enough, and I had conveyed to him that they were no curiosities; but it did not strike me, till I heard his laugh, that the oracle had not spoken the expected words of wisdom, and that my superior information must have appeared to him nothing better than a sham.

This, indeed, is a very simple occurrence, but I have caught myself telling it often as a good tale, as the sort of thing a man mentions at his own expense with a fair conviction that he can afford to do so, as a funny exception to his general accuracy and information.

People all over the world have certainly a tendency to endow somebody else with the credit for possessing superior information. Very clever people are constantly committing themselves by the perfect reliance they place upon the opinion or advice of some contemptible quack. A man who has given his whole heart, and most of his life to law, theology, or the classics, will often go for information on a matter of horseflesh or farming to some new pretender who happens to have at command a few special and technical phrases. A man or a child may pass for an adept without much apprenticeship. Let him assert himself pretty loudly, and he is sure of listeners. I once made the acquaintance of a very gaudy barn-door cock; he was in the habit of strutting and crowing his challenges all day; but I regret to add that, when at last they were answered, when a neighbouring fowl of small stature burst upon his dunghill, he fled in the most disreputable manner, before the very faces of his hens. He had not a ha'porth of the pluck he bragged of. The adept sometimes is sterling enough, no doubt, but frequently he is some little fool to whom accident has given a character for proficiency. One would think that this latter personage could only

retain his ascendancy amongst the very ignorant or the very loving ; i.e., with the unsophisticated, or in the bosom of his family. These of course, one might imagine, would be content with a superstition, and fail to perceive the fallibility of their god. But the strange thing is, that wise men are so often contented to seek their information from the lips of ignorance.

What I mean to say is this, that not only is a man who has the credit for being an adept looked upon from all quarters with a wonderful respect, but that also it does not seem to be a particularly difficult matter to obtain that credit. In the instance which I have given of the *Gyrinus Natator*, I humbly consider that I arrogated nothing to myself: the oracle did not happen to be up in that subject ; and, besides, the oracle was busy and pre-occupied. There would have been nothing ludicrous in the response but for the expectation of its infallibility. But how I enjoy seeing a thorough-paced pretender floored ! And, after mature consideration, I think that a mere pretender to be a judge in wine is the finest and the fairest game of all. Observe with what expressive silence he seeks to convince you of his superior information ! He scorns to bluster about his knowledge. He covers the glass with both his hands, and sniffs the aroma when the wine is supposed to be warm ; he holds the stem lightly between his finger and thumb, sloping the glass a little, and looks intently upon what he conceives to be an oily richness running down the sides of the glass. Then, perhaps, he pronounces on the vintage or the bin, as the case may be. He tells you that it is very fine wine indeed ; that it ought to be drunk, however, as there is a good deal of it, he believes, and it would be a sin to let it get *passé*. This, and all the rest of it, which we know so well by heart, he says and does. Alas ! for his superior information ; for you, suspecting that he was an impostor, gave him a bottle out of the cask of something rather tawny. A little circumstance once occurred within my own knowledge, which is, perhaps, worth setting down here. Some gentlemen, who were either a committee, or a board, or a meeting, at any rate who had met together very many times on business, determined, as such gentlemen do determine, to solace their anxieties with a dinner. This dinner was to be given at some first-rate hotel, either in Manchester or Liverpool, I believe. Well, as the dinner was to be dainty and the wines "curious," the original business committee appointed yet another committee amongst themselves, which should have power to choose two able and experienced men given to a familiarity with French dishes, but, above and beyond all, connoisseurs in wine. As far as the mere dinner went, I understand that they got on tolerably well—possibly their only business here consisted in approving the elaborate *carte* sent them by the cook ; but the wine was a more solemn matter. A great responsibility rested on them. With champagne, of course, they were safe, as the brand was a sufficient guide. Neither did they at all commit themselves in the matter of claret ; Lafitte and a heavy price carried them through. But with port wine they found some difficulty, and their opinions were divided. It grew dark as they argued and tasted, and lights were

brought. They were left alone in the room at last with port and sherry ; and when at length the time came for these superiorly-informed beings, these, the elect of the committee, to produce the port which they had chosen out of so many samples, lo ! and behold ! it was *brown sherry*.

Now, I wonder if I may say, without disrespect to the clergy, that it is very seldom I obtain from the pulpit the information which I desire. That information ought to be superior, because it commonly comes from educated gentlemen, and always from those who are supposed to have made its subject their special study. Sometimes it is superior ; it is better than one's own, I mean ; it is as good as the pages of a book. It is a common and a hateful fault ; it is a silly and a disreputable fashion, which reviles the clergy of these kingdoms. With the exception perhaps of the bar, there is no profession whose members are so well informed as those of the clerical. And yet how frequently is one ashamed of the sermon, and indirectly of the clergyman who preaches it ! Very often his superior information is taken wholesale and word for word from somebody else's printed sermon ; occasionally he only steals the skeleton and the thoughts ; sometimes he borrows a friend's lucubrations, and, in that way, very possibly gives us the benefit of thoughts twice stolen. But I am very seriously afraid that the most common practice is to contrive by some means to do without any thoughts at all. This is a pity and distressing. It is pretentious and unfair, and an abuse of confidence, for a man to dress himself up in a silk gown and walk solemnly along an aisle, and slowly up some steps, conducted by another man with a red collar and a blue stick with gilding at the top, when he has got nothing to say. The public have been saying their prayers, and are quite contented to let well alone ; they are ready to leave the church with reverential thoughts and good desires ; they are not exorbitant in their demands, and really don't want to trouble anybody for anything more. But when the responsible parties offer to begin again, when they tacitly assure us that there is yet another matter worth staying for, and when this other matter is ushered in with the pomp and promise mentioned above, it does seem reasonable that some effort should be made to rise above rigmarole, and to present something of a higher character than the most vapid platitudes. And yet there is in the depths a deeper still. However annoying it may be to have a string of unmeaning sentences forced upon you, it is much more annoying, and I think irritating, to have some ridiculous truism recommended to your understanding with as much circumstance and show as if it were a recent discovery in polemica, or an important message from Heaven. Worst of all is that explanation which seeks to recommend itself by its condescension, which is supposed to come from a great mind to a very narrow one, which charitably amplifies matters in order to make them easy. Thus, I once heard with my own ears a piece of superior information which made them tingle, and surely nothing less than the reticence of good manners could have saved the congregation from committing themselves in shouts of laughter. "As it were a young lion lurking in secret," said the preacher ;

"that is, my brethren," he kindly continued, "a lion 'in the bloom of youth." O ye gods! a rosy-cheeked lion, a blushing lion! And yet he never saw the incongruity, but thought in his heart that he had made matters clear and comfortable to our comprehensions.

Perhaps, as a matter of fact, every one is better informed than his fellow upon some point, and every one therefore who can speak or write is capable of conveying information. But let us take care that the man to whom we go is a stealing man, a genuine professor of the subject on which we consult him. No one surely who wished to learn how to milk a cow would apply to the school-girl who was passing through a course of instruction, but to the milkmaid herself. Neither would a reasonable man who desired to become acquainted with top-dressing and turnips inquire of any other than an experienced farmer. But from these, undoubtedly, a great deal might be learned. The relative value of a knowledge of the classics and a knowledge of milking or of agriculture has little to do with the fact that farmer and classic have each a very considerable amount of knowledge which the other does not possess. The presence of superior information on one side is as clear as its presence on the other; and no one, however learned, who will condescend to ask questions, can go through the world without confessing that he becomes a wiser man almost every day of his life.

I think we deceive ourselves wretchedly about the amount and value of our information. General knowledge is exceedingly superficial with the mass of "educated people," though they may be, perhaps, the last to think so. We take our acquirements too much for granted. Most of us, perhaps, know how far Mercury is from the sun; that the peregrine falcon changes the colour and markings of her plumage after the first moult, and that flint is one of the primitive earths. But should we be able to endure one of the great tests of a thorough soundness; to answer, off-hand, the searching, though simple, questions of a child in the easy rudiments of astronomy, ornithology, or geology? However, men will gild an ornament when they cannot afford a golden one; and we are all ready enough to assert ourselves in matters of information: we don't let the world rate us at too low an estimate. The best of us tag on a bit of tinsel sometimes. We all do it,—from the man who "grams" his conversation, to him who is only silent in order that he may appear to know. And really, after all, there is nothing very alarming in all this. There is often much less hypocrisy in it than in the conventional "Good morning;" and if a man will only refrain from irritating his fellow-creatures, by assuming their boundless ignorance in the explanation he offers them on matters which are patent to mankind; if he will avoid, as far as possible, flourishing his superior information in their faces when they least desire it; if he will not profess a profound acquaintance with matters of which he is entirely ignorant, we shall all jog on very comfortably, either in our learning or our ignorance; for, whatever else we may lack or possess, there will at least be the happy presence of that invaluable companion, good-humour.

The Modern Doctrine of Culture.

WHAT is at present styled culture must always have existed among men as a practice, but the idea of it is now for the first time struggling into definite shape as a doctrine. Even yet it has not, so far as I know, been strictly formulated, but the human intellect in Europe is gradually realizing it; and when this is done, a striking addition will have been made to our intellectual notions. It would be hard to overrate the importance of this fact, for the likelihood is, that new stars appear in the sky oftener than new doctrines dawn upon men's minds. There is something, too, very peculiar in this case, from the circumstance that the idea has suggested itself generally, and has had no apostle. Goethe's name is the one most prominently connected with it; but that was owing to his notably practising it as an art, rather than his revealing it as a science. As we have said, this latter has not been done even yet, and, possibly, it is still too early for any successful attempt at it. We can only adumbrate the doctrine, so to speak. Its speciality, I conceive, is this, that it urges to a conscious conduct of life in which goodness is no longer the final object. A fresh department of behaviour is visibly thrown open, in the case of which the common virtues are not specifically relevant; a higher branch of morals is instituted, in which the factors are not justice and truth, but a set of artistic sensibilities. The preliminary explanation of this is, that the doctrine does not, in the first instance, refer to overt acts, but to experience of another kind; until recently, this latter portion of human existence has been theoretically overlooked, though, of course, it could never be practically ignored. Ethical teaching has restricted itself to enforcing honesty and generosity, but these obligations only bear upon our relations to our fellows. What has generosity to do with our admiration of a work of art, or honesty with our thrills in presence of a sunset? The duties in this interior sphere of our lives are to ourselves, not to others; and the suggestions offering as to their nature are so novel, that intelligible description is hardly to be essayed. We moderns find ourselves under subtle obligations to be this and that, instead of the ancient and more tangible ones of, to do such and such things; and the only answer we get to the question of how this can be effected is, by culture. Mere correctness of living, according to this new view, goes only part way; you must not only be good but capable; and the last, worst sin of all is impotency to enjoy!

The mental notion underlying this doctrine of culture, appears to be this, that our emotional experience is the final fact of life, in reference to which the virtues and everything else need only be considered as means; and, further, that we may chiefly determine the character of this expe-

rience for ourselves by the consciously controlled use of our emotions. To this we must add the implied discovery of the important distinction, that our experience divides into two classes, the one of which may be called transitive, and the other intransitive; that is to say, in the former case the behaviour expresses itself in overt action, while in the latter case the experience is wholly passive. It is to these last-named states of mind that culture applies; and it holds the same position in reference to them that morality does in relation to practical conduct. The intransitive has always necessarily been a wider and more important sphere of life than the transitive, for in the mundane arrangement of things, opportunities for overt action present themselves very sluggishly and sparsely contrasted with the quick and continuous action of the feelings; and although in modern times the world grows busier than of old, civilization progressively multiplying the active opportunities, still the intransitive region has extended itself upon a larger scale than the transitive. Our ideas and feelings are in more striking disproportion to our doings than ever; and it may be this fact which has forced upon us the idea of culture as a doctrine. Religious contemplation used to be the only opening for culture, in addition to the delight offered by the Fine Arts, but a fresh domain has been added by modern physical science, its disclosures pressing even the intellect into this service by the sheer grandeur of our mental conceptions of the world we find ourselves in. The field of our knowledge, owing to the revelations of the telescope, the microscope, chemical analysis, scientific classification, as in the case of geology, and the increasing stores of information resulting from foreign travel and international intercourse, is extended far beyond the possibilities or needs of the practical conduct. The heavens and the earth are opened to us, new constellations of discoveries ever arising, which startle us with feelings of surprise and joy, underneath which we have simply to sit still. Something very nearly akin to this may even now be said of the way in which we are affected by the spectacle of the wonders which man himself achieves by the aid of present scientific appliances. Our contemplation of modern constructive and manufacturing feats, and of the control we are obtaining over elementary forces, is in itself an additional means of a more liberal culture, since the intransitive feelings are now often aroused by it, and that very acutely. But, perhaps, a still more striking instance of the enlargement of the sphere of culture in recent times remains to be noted. The ancients, as it has often been remarked, had no school of landscape-painting, and there are few traces among them of anything answering to that intense feeling which we now call by the name of a love of Nature. It is not to be supposed, for we have proofs to the contrary, that the Greeks, for example, did not feel some emotion at the sight of the quiet sea, or when standing under the arch of the midnight sky; but there is no evidence whatever that this feeling was cultivated designedly, only for the enjoyment of it. Now, however, men deliberately make journeys across the world to hear

the thunder of a cataract, and watch the shiftings of its intermingling rainbows in the white horizon of spray; they laboriously, and at risk of personal safety, climb mountains at midnight, to await the uprising of the sun: valleys, dales, and hills have rival reputations, just as beautiful women have, and worshippers seek them from far and near. There is scarcely a hidden brook which has not its pilgrim adorer, or a stray flower without some devotee. In these instances, it is not knowledge which is the means of the experience, but only a sort of sensuous observation. This may now and again, and with more or less completeness, run into a contemplation of the power, wisdom, and goodness displayed, but that is not a necessary consequence.

What we have hitherto mentioned, may be described as new, additional departments of culture, arising out of the fresh circumstantial arrangements of modern life; but literature has always been held a chief means of culture, the poets and the story-tellers everywhere appearing from the earliest times. If, however, not a fresh appliance, still the modern development of literature amounts to an enormous increase of the influence of this old agency. Let it be borne in mind that all writings read for the mere enjoyment furnished in the reading are instruments of culture, and of no use further; and, then, let it be imagined to what extent this practice is carried in these days, when every person, by the general diffusion of the art of reading, is his own story-teller. The printing-press has now placed the Book in all hands, and by means of it, in the recurring pauses of business, on the hearth, in the railway carriage, aboard the ship, we are ever using our emotions artificially. A special criticism is also suggested here. In past times, even the most poetical romance was understood to have a body of fact in it, but now we have got to avowed fiction, all pretence of actual reality being wilfully thrown aside. Very soon it cannot but be recognized, even popularly, that our modern general literature, of which the Novel is becoming more and more the type, is only a gigantic machinery for the enjoyment of the feelings. The reading of fiction is not the highest form of culture, since, owing to the emotions being mainly aroused by sight of personal vicissitudes, the feelings have a tendency to specifically define themselves, and to point towards action; but this is now greatly, and increasingly, checked by the knowledge that pure fiction is practised; and thus the transitive feelings may almost be said to form intransitive habits, again widening the sphere of culture, although in a lower range. A further illustration of the extension of culture as a practice is furnished by the ever-growing popularity of music. Already by the aid of the modern pianoforte instrument, music is almost perpetual and omnipresent. But all the agencies alluded to may be classed together as exemplifying the fast developing habit of relying upon artificial arrangements of circumstances for the exercise of our emotional capabilities. This practice has now reached a point at which it is almost matter of necessity that it should force upon us a mental conception of culture as a doctrine.

Has culture any* dangers? Some of those who have most clearly perceived the growing tendency towards it, express strange apprehensions. The risk of it appears to lie in a certain reflex bearing it may have upon our practical lives. When the notion is fully realized that selected and artificial arrangements are better for the purposes of emotion than actual circumstances, will fixedness of principles be observed? If goodness is no longer held to be an end in itself, but only useful as a means for securing a result in our 'experience,' may not justice and honour come to be regarded as rude, provisional rules, only absolutely obligatory during the infancy of men, before they had arrived at an intelligent discretion of expediency? May men seek to pick and choose, to re-arrange and select in the practical as well as the ideal life, having reference simply to emotional gratifications? Will the sense of duty be transformed from the recognition of a positive and outward obligation into a mere feeling of an inward impulse, without fixedness, but changing and varying with the mood? May not persons even be tempted designedly to exhaust the varieties of conduct, for the very purpose of testing the possibilities of experience; each one again plucking for himself the fatal apple of the dread tree of life, from the old fascinating curiosity of distinguishing good and evil? These are disturbing questions, and the more so since there seems to be some evidence pointing in favour of the more startling answer. Even in religious matters, where individual conviction has the severest sway, a kind of laxness of denominational principles is showing itself. In all quarters the talk is now of "union," and the desire for that appears to be rising above the claims of distinctive belief; an impatience is evinced that considerations of abstract truth should stand in the way of social intercourse. Does not, it may be asked, this indicate a dilapidation of the conscience? Is it not likely that vigorous, healthy morality will be exchanged for a weak and morbid sentimentalism? It may be well, however, to remember that a new doctrine is certain to start fears of this kind, merely by its being new. Christianity itself, for instance, which was most essentially a new religious *cult*, must have raised among the believers in the Law very unsettling questions much akin to these. Some passages of St. Paul's Epistles set at nought all positive prescriptions in favour of an emotional state of mind; but the new motives, intangible as they might at first appear, proved themselves fully adequate in practice. The reassuring guarantee, however, is, that the*feelings which actuate the practical life cannot be greatly interfered with by ideal culture; they will not allow of much meddling with in an experimental way: while nobody in their sane wits can doubt that they *can* only be efficiently exercised according to the old-fashioned rules of positive morality, which are thus quite safe against being imagined away. The culture of the intransitive and the transitive feelings does not proceed in the same way, nor by similar means. It is a man's own acts, and his personal relationships towards other individuals, which fix and regulate the latter; and those doings, to turn out

well, must be guided by the set commonplace rules of virtue. No doubt the old choice of wickedness or goodness will always lie before a man, and if he prefers illicit gratifications, he may enjoy them by neglecting virtue; but he will never be able to secure the delights of virtue by practising vice. No possible kind of culture can confuse experience in that way; so that it is hard to see where the actual danger is to arise.

We fancy that even the doctrinal laxness of the present day may be explained on specific grounds, without considering it an omen of the permanent relinquishment of the love of abstract truth, under the influence of misdirected culture. Denominational exclusiveness, with its consequent sense of superiority, used to bring into play a special emotion; but that feeling would seem to have grown stale for the present, and men now find an emotional gratification in cultivating union. Possibly the complacency of this charity will in time fail along with its novelty; and then men may withdraw again into the exclusiveness of opposing sections for the enjoyment of the other feeling. But culture proper has no necessary connection with this class of emotions at all; they are decidedly transitive, and are governed by different motives. The noticeable tendency toward ritualism setting in of late years is much more clearly connected with the recent systematic development of culture; for much of the feeling it awakens is intransitive, though some of it is not; but here again, the mere lapse of time since the disuse of the practices now resumed may have something to do with the matter; owing, that is, to the necessity for change of custom at historic intervals for the reinvigoration of the emotions. This influence of the feelings on the vicissitudes of controversy, apart from intellectual necessities, has never been fully investigated. Its clear understanding would, I feel assured, explain the direction of many of our present activities, religious, social, and political; and would also, it is not improbable, enable us to predict new diversions of our energies. But this can in no way be properly called culture, for it does not admit of conscious individual practice; it depends on the passage of long periods of time, and the spontaneous impulse of masses of people. On the whole, therefore, I see little fear of the present increasing and progressive culture unsettling common morality; the two spheres are distinct, and never can be more than very temporarily and very slightly confused. At present, this may be a little the case, but the better apprehending of culture as a doctrine will be certain to correct it; while by the practice of it in the additional fields of contemplation modern times are throwing open, human life will be greatly enriched.



THE SHIP TO CERBERUS

W. THOMAS S.

Armada.

BOOK THE FIFTH.

CHAPTER I—continued.

MISS GWILT'S DIARY.



OCTOBER 16th. — Two days missed out of my Diary! I can hardly tell why, unless it is that Armadale irritates me beyond all endurance. The mere sight of him takes me back to Thorpe-Ambrose. I fancy I must have been afraid of what I might write about him, in the course of the last two days, if I indulged myself in the dangerous luxury of opening these pages.

"This morning, I am afraid of nothing—and I take up my pen again accordingly.

"Is there any limit, I wonder, to the brutish stupidity of some men? I thought I had discovered Armadale's limit when I was his neighbour in Norfolk—but my later experience at Naples shows me that I was

wrong. He is perpetually in and out of this house (crossing over to us in a boat from the hotel at Santa Lucia, where he sleeps); and he has exactly two subjects of conversation—the yacht for sale in the harbour here, and Miss Milroy. Yes! he selects me as the confidante of his devoted attachment to the major's daughter! 'It's so nice to talk to a woman about it!' That is all the apology he has thought it necessary to make for appealing to my sympathies—*my* sympathies!—on the subject of 'his darling Neelie,' fifty times a day. He is evidently persuaded (if he thinks about it at all) that I have forgotten, as completely as he has forgotten, all that once passed between us, when I was first at Thorpe-Ambrose. Such an utter want of the commonest delicacy and the commonest tact, in

a creature who is, to all appearance, possessed of a skin, and not a hide, and who does, unless my ears deceive me, talk, and not bray, is really quite incredible when one comes to think of it. But it is, for all that, quite true. He asked me—he actually asked me, last night—how many hundreds a year the wife of a rich man could spend on her dress. ‘Don’t put it too low,’ the idiot added, with his intolerable grin. ‘Neelie shall be one of the best-dressed women in England when I have married her.’ And this to me, after having had him at my feet, and then losing him again through Miss Milroy! This to me, with an Alpaca gown on, and a husband whose income must be helped by a newspaper!

“I had better not dwell on it any longer. I had better think and write of something else.

“The yacht. As a relief from hearing about Miss Milroy, I declare the yacht in the harbour is quite an interesting subject to me! She (the *mén* call a vessel ‘She’; and I suppose if the women took an interest in such things, *they* would call a vessel ‘He’); she is a beautiful model; and her ‘top-sides’ (whatever they may be) are especially distinguished by being built of mahogany. But, with these merits, she has the defect, on the other hand, of being old—which is a sad drawback—and the crew and the sailing-master have been ‘paid off,’ and sent home to England—which is additionally distressing. Still, if a new crew and a new sailing-master can be picked up here, such a beautiful creature (with all her drawbacks) is not to be despised. It might answer to hire her for a cruise, and to see how she behaves. (If she is of *my* mind, her behaviour will rather astonish her new master!) The cruise will determine what faults she has, and what repairs, through the unlucky circumstance of her age, she really stands in need of. And then it will be time to settle, whether to buy her outright or not. Such is Armadale’s conversation, when he is not talking of ‘his darling Neelie.’ And Midwinter, who can steal no time from his newspaper work, for his wife, can steal hours for his friend, and can offer them unreservedly to my irresistible rival, the new yacht.

“I shall write no more, to-day. If so ladylike a person as I am could feel a tigerish tingling all over her to the very tips of her fingers, I should suspect myself of being in that condition at the present moment. But, with *my* manners and accomplishments, the thing is, of course, out of the question. We all know that a lady has no passions.

“October 17th.—A letter for Midwinter this morning, from the slave-owners—I mean the newspaper-people in London—which has set him at work again harder than ever. A visit at luncheon-time, and another visit at dinner-time from Armadale. Conversation at luncheon about the yacht. Conversation at dinner about Miss Milroy. I have been honoured, in regard to that young lady, by an invitation to go with Armadale to-morrow to the Toledo, and help him to buy some presents for the beloved object. I didn’t fly out at him—I only made an excuse. Can words

express the astonishment I feel at my own patience? No words can express it.

*“ October 18th.—*Armadale came to breakfast this morning, by way of catching Midwinter before he shuts himself up over his work.

“ Conversation the same as yesterday's conversation at lunch. Armadale has made his bargain with the agent for hiring the yacht. The agent (compassionating his total ignorance of the language) has helped him to find an interpreter, but can't help him to find a crew. The interpreter is civil and willing, but doesn't understand the sea. Midwinter's assistance is indispensable; and Midwinter is requested (and consents!) to work harder than ever, so as to make time for helping his friend. When the crew is found, the merits and defects of the vessel are to be tried by a cruise to Sicily, with Midwinter on board to give his opinion. Lastly (in case she should feel lonely), the ladies' cabin is most obligingly placed at the disposal of Midwinter's wife. All this was settled at the breakfast-table; and it ended with one of Armadale's neatly-turned compliments, addressed to myself:—‘I mean to take Neellie sailing with me, when we are married. And you have such good taste, you will be able to tell me everything the ladies' cabin wants between that time and this.’

*“*If some women bring such men as this into the world, ought other women to allow them to live? It is a matter of opinion. I think not.

*“*What maddens me, is to see, as I do see plainly, that Midwinter finds in Armadale's company, and in Armadale's new yacht, a refuge from me. He is always in better spirits when Armadale is here. He forgets me in Armadale almost as completely as he forgets me in his work. And I bear it! What a pattern wife, what an excellent Christian I am!

*“ October 19th.—*Nothing new. Yesterday over again.

*“ October 20th.—*One piece of news. Midwinter is suffering from nervous headache; and is working in spite of it, to make time for his holiday with his friend.

*“ October 21st.—*Midwinter is worse. Angry and wild and unapproachable, after two bad nights, and two uninterrupted days at his desk. Under any other circumstances he would take the warning, and leave off. But nothing warns him now. He is still working as hard as ever, for Armadale's sake. How much longer will my patience last?

*“ October 22nd.—*Signs, last night, that Midwinter is taxing his brains beyond what his brains will bear. When he did fall asleep, he was frightfully restless; groaning and talking and grinding his teeth. From some of the words I heard, he seemed at one time to be dreaming of his life when he was a boy, roaming the country with the dancing dogs. At another time he was back again with Armadale, imprisoned all night on the wrecked ship. Towards the early morning hours, he grew quieter. I

fell asleep; and, waking after a short interval, found myself alone. My first glance round showed me a light burning in Midwinter's dressing-room. I rose softly, and went to look at him.

"He was seated in the great ugly old-fashioned chair, which I ordered to be removed into the dressing-room out of the way, when we first came here. His head lay back, and one of his hands hung listlessly over the arm of the chair. The other hand was on his lap. I stole a little nearer, and saw that exhaustion had overpowered him, while he was either reading or writing—for there were books, pens, ink, and paper on the table before him. What had he got up to do secretly, at that hour of the morning? I looked closer at the papers on the table. They were all neatly folded (as he usually keeps them), with one exception—and that exception, lying open on the rest, was Mr. Brock's letter.

"I looked round at him again, after making this discovery, and then noticed for the first time another written paper, lying under the hand that rested on his lap. There was no moving it away without the risk of waking him. Part of the open manuscript, however, was not covered by his hand. I looked at it to see what he had secretly stolen away to read, besides Mr. Brock's letter—and made out enough to tell me that it was the Narrative of Armadale's Dream.

"That second discovery sent me back at once to my bed—with something serious to think of.

"Travelling through France, on our way to this place, Midwinter's shyness was conquered for once, by a very pleasant man—an Irish doctor—whom we met in the railway carriage, and who quite insisted on being friendly and sociable with us all through the day's journey. Finding that Midwinter was devoting himself to literary pursuits, our travelling companion warned him not to pass too many hours together at his desk. 'Your face tells me more than you think,' the doctor said. 'If you are ever tempted to overwork your brain, you will feel it sooner than most men. When you find your nerves playing you strange tricks, don't neglect the warning—drop your pen.'

"After my last night's discovery in the dressing-room, it looks as if Midwinter's nerves were beginning already to justify the doctor's opinion of them. If one of the tricks they are playing him, is the trick of tormenting him again with his old superstitious terrors, there will be a change in our lives here before long. I shall wait curiously to see whether the conviction that we two are destined to bring fatal danger to Armadale, takes possession of Midwinter's mind once more. If it does, I know what will happen. He will not stir a step towards helping his friend to find a crew for the yacht; and he will certainly refuse to sail with Armadale, or to let me sail with him, on the trial cruise.

"October 23rd.—Mr. Brock's letter has, apparently, not lost its influence yet. Midwinter is working again to-day, and is as anxious as ever for the holiday-time that he is to pass with his friend.

"*Two o'clock.*—Armadale here as usual; eager to know when Midwinter will be at his service. No definite answer to be given to the question yet—seeing that it all depends on Midwinter's capacity to continue at his desk. Armadale sat down disappointed—he yawned, and put his great clumsy hands in his pockets. I took up a book. The brute didn't understand that I wanted to be left alone; he began again on the unendurable subject of Miss Milroy, and of all the fine things she was to have when he married her. Her own riding horse; her own pony-carriage; her own beautiful little sitting-room upstairs at the great house, and so on. All that I might have had once, Miss Milroy is to have now—if I let her.

"*Six o'clock.*—More of the everlasting Armadale! Half an hour since, Midwinter came in from his writing, giddy and exhausted. I had been pining all day for a little music, and I knew they were giving *Norma* at the theatre here. It struck me that an hour or two at the opera might do Midwinter good, as well as me; and I said, 'Why not take a box at the San Carlo to-night?' He answered in a dull, uninterested manner, that he was not rich enough to take a box. Armadale was present, and flourished his well-filled purse in his usual insufferable way. 'I'm rich enough, old boy, and it comes to the same thing.' With those words, he took up his hat, and trampled out on his great elephant's feet, to get the box. I looked after him from the window, as he went down the street. 'Your widow, with her twelve hundred a year,' I thought to myself, 'might take a box at the San Carlo whenever she pleased, without being beholden to anybody.' The empty-headed wretch whistled as he went his way to the theatre, and tossed his loose silver magnificently to every beggar who ran after him.

* * * *

"*Midnight.*—I am alone again at last. Have I nerve enough to write the history of this terrible evening, just as it has passed? I have nerve enough, at any rate, to turn to a new leaf, and try.

CHAPTER II.

THE DIARY CONTINUED.

"WE went to the San Carlo. Armadale's stupidity showed itself, even in such a simple matter as taking a box. He had confounded an opera with a play, and had chosen a box close to the stage, with the idea that one's chief object at a musical performance is to see the faces of the singers as plainly as possible! Fortunately for our ears, Bellini's lovely melodies are, for the most part, tenderly and delicately accompanied—or the orchestra might have deafened us.

"I sat back in the box at first, well out of sight; for it was impossible to be sure that some of my old friends of former days at Naples might

not be in the theatre. But the sweet music gradually tempted me out of my seclusion. I was so charmed and interested that I leaned forward without knowing it, and looked at the stage.

"I was made aware of my own imprudence, by a discovery which, for the moment, literally chilled my blood. One of the singers, among the chorus of Druids, was looking at me while he sang with the rest. His head was disguised in the long white hair, and the lower part of his face was completely covered with the flowing white beard, proper to the character. But the eyes with which he looked at me were the eyes of the one man on earth whom I have most reason to dread ever seeing again—Manuel!

"If it had not been for my smelling-bottle, I believe I should have lost my senses. As it was, I drew back again into the shadow. Even Armadale noticed the sudden change in me: he, as well as Midwinter, asked if I was ill. I said I felt the heat, but hoped I should be better presently—and then leaned back in the box, and tried to rally my courage. I succeeded in recovering self-possession enough to be able to look again at the stage (without showing myself) the next time the chorus appeared. There was the man again! But to my infinite relief, he never looked towards our box a second time. This welcome indifference, on his part, helped to satisfy me that I had seen an extraordinary accidental resemblance, and nothing more. I still hold to this conclusion, after having had leisure to think—but my mind would be more completely at ease than it is, if I had seen the rest of the man's face, without the stage disguises that hid it from all investigation.

"When the curtain fell on the first act, there was a tiresome ballet to be performed (according to the absurd Italian custom), before the opera went on. Though I had got over my first fright, I had been far too seriously startled to feel comfortable in the theatre. I dreaded all sorts of impossible accidents—and when Midwinter and Armadale put the question to me, I told them I was not well enough to stay through the rest of the performance.

"At the door of the theatre, Armadale proposed to say good night. But Midwinter—evidently dreading the evening with me—asked him to come back to supper, if I had no objection. I said the necessary words—and we all three returned together to this house.

"Ten minutes' quiet in my own room (assisted by a little dose of Eau-de-Cologne and water) restored me to myself. I joined the men at the supper-table. They received my apologies for taking them away from the opera, with the complimentary assurance that I had not cost either of them the slightest sacrifice of his own pleasure. Midwinter declared that he was too completely worn out to care for anything but the two great blessings, unattainable at the theatre, of quiet and fresh air. Armadale said—with an Englishman's exasperating pride in his own stupidity, wherever a matter of Art is concerned—that he couldn't make head or tail of the performance. The principal disappointment, he was good

enough to add, was mine, for I evidently understood foreign music, and enjoyed it. Ladies generally did. His darling little Neelie—

"I was in no humour to be persecuted with his 'Darling Neelie' after what I had gone through at the theatre. It might have been the irritated state of my nerves, or it might have been the Eau-de-Cologne flying to my head—but the bare mention of the girl seemed to set me in a flame. I tried to turn Armadale's attention in the direction of the supper-table. He was much obliged, but he had no appetite for more. 'I offered him wine next—the wine of the country, which is all that our poverty allows us to place on the table. He was much obliged again. The foreign wine was very little more to his taste than the foreign music; but he would take some because I asked him; and he would drink my health in the old-fashioned way—with his best wishes for the happy time when we should all meet again at Thorpe-Ambrose, and when there would be a mistress to welcome me at the great house.

"Was he mad to persist in this way? No; his face answered for him. He was under the impression that he was making himself particularly agreeable to me.

"I looked at Midwinter. He might have seen some reason for interfering to change the conversation, if he had looked at me in return. But he sat silent in his chair, irritable and overworked, with his eyes on the ground, thinking.

"I got up and went to the window. Still impenetrable to a sense of his own clumsiness, Armadale followed me. If I had been strong enough to toss him out of the window into the sea, I should certainly have done it at that moment. Not being strong enough, I looked steadily at the view over the bay, and gave him a hint, the broadest and rudest I could think of, to go.

"A lovely night for a walk,' I said, 'if you are tempted to walk back to the hotel.'

"I doubt if he heard me. At any rate I produced no sort of effect on him. He stood staring sentimentally at the moonlight; and—there is really no other word to express it—blew a sigh. I felt a presentiment of what was coming, unless I stopped his mouth by speaking first.

"With all your fondness for England,' I said, 'you must own that we have no such moonlight as that at home.'

"He looked at me vacantly, and blew another sigh.

"I wonder whether it's as fine to-night in England as it is here?' he said. 'I wonder whether my dear little girl at home is looking at the moonlight, and thinking of Me?'

"I could endure it no longer. I flew out at him at last.

"Good heavens, Mr. Armadale!' I exclaimed, 'is there only one subject worth mentioning, in the narrow little world you live in? I'm sick to death of Miss Milroy. Do pray talk of something else!'

"His great broad stupid face coloured up to the roots of his hideous yellow hair. 'I beg your pardon,' he stammered, with a kind of sulky

surprise. 'I didn't suppose——' he stopped confusedly, and looked from me to Midwinter. I understood what the look meant. 'I didn't suppose she could be jealous of Miss Milroy after marrying *you*!' That is what he would have said to Midwinter, if I had left them alone together in the room!

"As it was, Midwinter had heard us. Before I could speak again—before Armadale could add another word—he finished his friend's uncompleted sentence, in a tone that I now heard, and with a look that I now saw, for the first time.

"'You didn't suppose, Allan,' he said, 'that a lady's temper could be so easily provoked.'

"The first bitter word of irony, the first hard look of contempt, I had ever had from him! And Armadale the cause of it!

"My anger suddenly left me. Something came in its place, which steadied me in an instant, and took me silently out of the room.

"I sat down alone in the bed-room. I had a few minutes of thought with myself, which I don't choose to put into words, even in these secret pages. I got up, and unlocked—never mind what. I went round to Midwinter's side of the bed, and took—no matter what I took. The last thing I did, before I left the room, was to look at my watch. It was half-past ten; Armadale's usual time for leaving us. I went back at once and joined the two men again.

"I approached Armadale good-humouredly, and said to him,—

"No! On second thoughts, I won't put down what I said to him—or what I did, afterwards. I'm sick of Armadale! he turns up at every second word I write. I shall pass over what happened in the course of the next hour—the hour between half-past ten and half-past eleven—and take up my story again at the time when Armadale had left us. Can I tell what took place, as soon as our visitor's back was turned, between Midwinter and me in our own room? Why not pass over what happened, in that case as well as in the other? Why agitate myself by writing it down? I don't know! Why do I keep a diary at all? Why did the clever thief the other day (in the English newspapers) keep the very thing to convict him, in the shape of a record of every thing he stole? Why are we not perfectly reasonable in all that we do? Why am I not always on my guard and never inconsistent with myself, like a wicked character in a novel? Why? why? why?

"I don't care why! I must write down what happened between Midwinter and me to-night, *because* I must. There's a reason that nobody can answer—myself included.

* * * * *

"It was half-past eleven. Armadale had gone. I had put on my dressing-gown, and had just sat down to arrange my hair for the night, when I was surprised by a knock at the door—and Midwinter came in.

"He was frightfully pale. His eyes looked at me with a terrible

despair in them. He never answered when I expressed my surprise at his coming in so much sooner than usual ; he wouldn't even tell me, when I asked the question, if he was ill. Pointing peremptorily to the chair from which I had risen on his entering the room, he told me to sit down again ; and then after a moment, added these words :—‘ I have something serious to say to you.’

“ I thought of what I had done—or, no, of what I had tried to do—in that interval between half past ten and half past eleven, which I have left unnoticed in my diary—and the deadly sickness of terror, which I never felt at the time, came upon me now. I sat down again, as I had been told, without speaking to Midwinter, and without looking at him.

“ He took a turn up and down the room, and then came and stood over me.

“ ‘ If Allan comes here to-morrow,’ he began, ‘ and if you see him——’

“ His voice faltered, and he said no more. There was some dreadful grief at his heart that was trying to master him. But there are times when his will is a will of iron. He took another turn in the room, and crushed it down. He came back, and stood over me again.

“ ‘ When Allan comes here to-morrow,’ he resumed, ‘ let him come into my room, if he wants to see me. I shall tell him that I find it impossible to finish the work I now have on hand as soon as I had hoped, and that he must, therefore, arrange to find a crew for the yacht, without any assistance on my part. If he comes, in his disappointment, to appeal to you—give him no hope of my being free in time to help him, if he waits.’ Encourage him to take the best assistance he can get from strangers, and to set about manning the yacht without any further delay. The more occupation he has to keep him away from this house ; and the less you encourage him to stay here, if he does come, the better I shall be pleased. Don't forget that, and don't forget one last direction which I have now to give you. When the vessel is ready for sea, and when Allan invites us to sail with him, it is my wish that you should positively decline to go. He will try to make you change your mind—for I shall, of course, decline, on my side, to leave you in this strange house and in this foreign country by yourself. No matter what he says, let nothing persuade you to alter your decision. Refuse, positively and finally ! Refuse, I insist on it, to set your foot on the new yacht !’

“ He ended quietly and firmly—with no faltering in his voice, and no signs of hesitation or relenting in his face. The sense of surprise which I might otherwise have felt at the strange words he had addressed to me, was lost in the sense of relief that they brought to my mind. The dread of those other words that I had expected to hear from him, left me as suddenly as it had come. I could look at him, I could speak to him once more.

“ ‘ You may depend,’ I answered, ‘ on my doing exactly what you

order me to do. Must I obey you blindly? Or may I know your reason for the extraordinary directions you have just given to me?’

“His face darkened, and he sat down on the other side of my dressing-table, with a heavy, hopeless sigh.

“‘You may know the reason,’ he said, ‘if you wish it.’ He waited a little, and considered. ‘You have a right to know the reason,’ he resumed, ‘for you yourself are concerned in it.’ He waited a little again, and again went on. ‘I can only explain the strange request I have just made to you, in one way,’ he said. ‘I must ask you to recall what happened in the next room, before Allan left us to-night.’

“He looked at me with a strange mixture of expressions in his face. At one moment I thought he felt pity for me. At another, it seemed more like horror of me. I began to feel frightened again; I waited for his next words in silence.

“‘I know that I have been working too hard lately,’ he went on, ‘and that my nerves are sadly shaken. It is possible, in the state I am in now, that I may have unconsciously misinterpreted, or distorted, the circumstances that really took place. You will do me a favour if you will test my recollection of what has happened by your own. If my fancy has exaggerated anything, if my memory is playing me false anywhere, I entreat you to stop me, and tell me of it.’

“I commanded myself sufficiently to ask what the circumstances were to which he referred, and in what way I was personally concerned in them.

“‘You were personally concerned in them, in this way,’ he answered. ‘The circumstances to which I refer, began with your speaking to Allan about Miss Milroy, in what I thought, a very inconsiderate and very impatient manner. I am afraid I spoke just as petulantly on my side—and I beg your pardon for what I said to you in the irritation of the moment. You left the room. After a short absence, you came back again, and made a perfectly proper apology to Allan, which he received with his usual kindness, and sweetness of temper. While this went on, you and he were both standing by the supper-table; and Allan resumed some conversation which had already passed between you about the Neapolitan wine. He said he thought he should learn to like it in time, and he asked leave to take another glass of the wine we had on the table. Am I right so far?’

“The words almost died on my lips; but I forced them out, and answered him that he was right so far.

“‘You took the flask out of Allan’s hand,’ he proceeded. ‘You said to him, good-humouredly, “You know you don’t really like the wine, Mr. Armadale. Let me make you something which may be more to your taste. I have a receipt of my own for lemonade. Will you favour me by trying it?”’ In those words, you made your proposal to him, and he accepted it. Did he also ask leave to look on, and learn how

the lemonade was made? and did you tell him that he would only confuse you, and that you would give him the receipt in writing, if he wanted it?’

‘This time, the words did really die on my lips. I could only bow my head, and answer ‘Yes’ mutely in that way. Midwinter went on.

“Allan laughed, and went to the window to look out at the Bay, and I went with him. After a while, Allan remarked, jocosely, that the mere sound of the liquids you were pouring out, made him thirsty. When he said this, I turned round from the window. I approached you, and said the lemonade took a long time to make. You touched me, as I was walking away again, and handed me the tumbler filled to the brim. At the same time, Allan turned round from the window; and I, in my turn, handed the tumbler to him.—Is there any mistake so far?’

“The quick throbbing of my heart almost choked me. I could just shake my head—I could do no more.

“‘I saw Allan raise the tumbler to his lips.—Did you see it? I saw his face turn white, in an instant.—Did you? I saw the glass fall from his hand on the floor. I saw him stagger, and caught him before he fell. Are these things true? For God’s sake, search your memory, and tell me—are these things true?’

“The throbbing at my heart seemed, for one breathless instant, to stop. The next moment something fiery, something maddening, flew through me. I started to my feet, with my temper in a flame, reckless of all consequences, desperate enough to say anything.

“‘Your questions are an insult! Your looks are an insult!’ I burst out. ‘*Do you think I tried to poison him?*’

“The words rushed out of my lips in spite of me. They were the last words under heaven that any woman, in such a situation as mine, ought to have spoken. And yet I spoke them!

“He rose in alarm, and gave me my smelling-bottle. ‘Hush! hush!’ he said. ‘You, too, are overwrought—you, too, are over-excited by all that has happened to-night. You are talking wildly and shockingly. Good God! how can you have so utterly misunderstood me? Compose yourself—pray, compose yourself.’

“He might as well have told a wild animal to compose herself. Having been mad enough to say the words, I was mad enough next, to return to the subject of the lemonade, in spite of his entreaties to me to be silent.

“‘I told you what I had put in the glass, the moment Mr. Armadale fainted,’ I went on; insisting furiously on defending myself, when no attack was made on me. ‘I told you I had taken the flask of brandy which you keep at your bedside, and mixed some of it with the lemonade. How could I know that he had a nervous horror of the smell and taste of brandy? Didn’t he say to me himself, when he came to his senses, it’s my fault; I ought to have warned you to put no brandy in it? Didn’t

he remind you, afterwards, of the time when you and he were in the Isle of Man together, and when the Doctor there innocently made the same mistake with him that I made to-night ?'

[“I laid a great stress on my innocence—and with some reason too. Whatever else I may be, I pride myself on not being a hypocrite. I *was* innocent—so far as the brandy was concerned. I had put it into the lemonade, in pure ignorance of Armadale's nervous peculiarity, to disguise the taste of—never mind what! Another of the things I pride myself on is, that I never wander from my subject. What Midwinter said next, is what I ought to be writing about now.]

“He looked at me for a moment, as if he thought I had taken leave of my senses. Then he came round to my side of the table, and stood over me again.

“‘If nothing else will satisfy you that you are entirely misinterpreting my motives,’ he said, ‘and that I haven't an idea of blaming *you* in the matter—read this.’

“He took a paper from the breast-pocket of his coat, and spread it open under my eyes. It was the Narrative of Armadale's Dream.

“In an instant the whole weight on my mind was lifted off it. I felt mistress of myself again—I understood him at last.

“‘Do you know what this is?’ he asked. ‘Do you remember what I said to you at Thorpe-Ambrose, about Allan's Dream? I told you, then, that two out of the three Visions had already come true. I tell you now, that the third Vision has been fulfilled in this house to-night.’

“He turned over the leaves of the manuscript, and pointed to the lines that he wished me to read.

“I read these, or nearly these words, from the Narrative of the Dream, as Midwinter had taken it down from Armadale's own lips:—

“‘The darkness opened for the third time, and showed me the Shadow of the Man, and the Shadow of the Woman together. The Man-Shadow was the nearest; the Woman-Shadow stood back. From where she stood, I heard a sound like the pouring out of a liquid softly. I saw her touch the Shadow of the Man with one hand, and give him a glass with the other. He took the glass, and handed it to me. At the moment when I put it to my lips, a deadly faintness overcame me. When I recovered my senses again, the Shadows had vanished, and the Vision was at an end.’

“For the moment, I was as completely staggered by this extraordinary coincidence as Midwinter himself.

“He put one hand on the open Narrative, and laid the other heavily on my arm.

“‘Now do you understand my motive in coming here?’ he asked. ‘Now do you see that the last hope I had to cling to, was the hope that your memory of the night's events might prove my memory to be wrong?’

Now do you know why I won't help Allan? Why I won't sail with him? Why I am plotting and lying, and making you plot and lie too, to keep my best and dearest friend out of the house?'

"'Have you forgotten Mr. Brock's letter?' I asked.

"He struck his hand passionately on the open manuscript. 'If Mr. Brock had lived to see what we have seen to-night, he would have felt what I feel, he would have said what I say!' His voice sank mysteriously, and his great black eyes glittered at me as he made that answer. 'Thrice the Shadows of the Vision warned Allan in his sleep,' he went on; 'and thrice those Shadows have been embodied in the after-time by You, and by Me! You, and no other, stood in the Woman's place at the pool. I, and no other, stood in the Man's place at the window. And you and I together, when the last Vision showed the Shadows together, stand in the Man's place and the Woman's place still! For *this*, the miserable day dawned when you and I first met. For *this*, your influence drew me to you, when my better angel warned me to fly the sight of your face. There is a curse on our lives! there is a fatality in our footsteps! Allan's future depends on his separation from us ~~at~~ once and for ever. Drive him from the place we live in, and the air we breathe. Force him among strangers—the worst and wickedest of them will be more harmless to him than we are! Let his yacht sail, though he goes on his knees to ask us, without You and without Me—and let him know how I loved him in another world than this, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest!'

"His grief conquered him—his voice broke into a sob when he spoke those last words. He took the Narrative of the Dream from the table, and left me as abruptly as he had come in.

"As I heard his door locked between us, my mind went back to what he had said to me, about myself. In remembering 'the miserable day' when we first saw each other, and 'the better angel' that had warned him to 'fly the sight of my face,' I forgot all else. It doesn't matter what I felt. I wouldn't own it, even if I had a friend to speak to. Who cares for the misery of such a woman as I am? who believes in it? Besides, he spoke under the influence of the mad superstition that has got possession of him again. There is every excuse for *him*—there is no excuse for *me*. If I can't help being fond of him, through it all, I must take the consequences and suffer. I deserve to suffer; I deserve neither love nor pity from anybody.—Good heavens, what a fool I am! And how unnatural all this would be, if it was written in a book!

"It has struck one. I can hear Midwinter still, pacing to and fro in his room.

"He is thinking, I suppose? Well! I can think too. What am I to do next? I shall wait and see. Events take odd turns, sometimes—and events may justify the fatalism of the amiable man in the next room, who curses the day when he first saw my face. He may live to curse it for other reasons than he has now. If I *am* the Woman pointed at in the

Dream, there will be another temptation put in my way before long—and there will be no brandy in Armadale's lemonade if I mix it for him a second time.

"October 24th.—Barely twelve hours have passed since I wrote my yesterday's entry—and that other temptation has come, tried, and conquered me already!

"This time there was no alternative. Instant exposure and ruin stared me in the face—I had no choice but to yield in my own defence. In plainer words still, it was no accidental resemblance that startled me at the theatre last night. The chorus-singer at the opera was Manuel himself!

"Not ten minutes after Midwinter had left the sitting-room for his study, the woman of the house came in with a dirty little three-cornered note in her hand. One look at the writing on the address was enough. He had recognized me in the box; and the ballet between the acts of the opera had given him time to trace me home. I drew that plain conclusion in the moment that elapsed before I opened the letter. It informed me, in two lines, that he was waiting in a by-street, leading to the beach; and that, if I failed to make my appearance in ten minutes, he should interpret my absence as an invitation to him to call at the house.

"What I went through yesterday, must have hardened me, I suppose. At any rate, after reading the letter, I felt more like the woman I once was than I have felt for months past. I put on my bonnet, and went downstairs, and left the house as if nothing had happened.

"He was waiting for me at the entrance to the street.

"In the instant when we stood face to face, all my wretched life with him came back to me. I thought of my trust that he had betrayed; I thought of the cruel mockery of a marriage that he had practised on me, when he knew that he had a wife living; I thought of the time when I had felt despair enough at his desertion of me to attempt my own life. When I recalled all this, and when the comparison between Midwinter and the mean, miserable villain whom I had once believed in, forced itself into my mind, I knew, for the first time, what a woman feels when every atom of respect for herself has left her. If he had personally insulted me, at that moment, I believe I should have submitted to it.

"But he had no idea of insulting me, in the more brutal meaning of the word. He had me at his mercy, and his way of making me feel it was to behave with an elaborate mockery of penitence and respect. I let him speak as he pleased, without interrupting him, without looking at him a second time, without even allowing my dress to touch him, as we walked together towards the quieter part of the beach. I had noticed the wretched state of his clothes, and the greedy glitter in his eyes, in my first look at him. And I knew it would end—as it did end—in a demand on me for money.

"Yes! After taking from me the last farthing I possessed of my own,

and the last farthing I could extort for him from my old mistress, he turned on me as we stood by the margin of the sea, and asked if I could reconcile it to my conscience to let him be wearing such a coat as he then had on his back, and earning his miserable living as a chorus-singer at the opera!

"My disgust, rather than my indignation, roused me into speaking to him at last.

"'You want money,' I said. 'Suppose I am too poor to give it to you?'

"'In that case,' he replied, 'I shall be forced to remember that you are a treasure in yourself. And I shall be under the painful necessity of pressing my claim to you on the attention of one of those two gentlemen whom I saw with you at the opera—the gentleman, of course, who is now honoured by your preference, and who lives provisionally in the light of your smiles.'

"I made him no answer—for I had no answer to give. Disputing his right to claim me from anybody, would have been a mere waste of words. He knew as well as I did that he had not the shadow of a claim on me. But the mere attempt to raise it would, as he was well aware, lead necessarily to the exposure of my whole past life.

"Still keeping silence, I looked out over the sea. I don't know why—except that I instinctively looked anywhere rather than look at him.

"A little sailing boat was approaching the shore. The man steering was hidden from me by the sail; but the boat was so near that I thought I recognized the flag on the mast. I looked at my watch. Yes! It was Armadale coming over from Santa Lucia, at his usual time, to visit us in his usual way.

"Before I had put my watch back in my belt, the means of extricating myself from the frightful position I was placed in showed themselves to me as plainly as I see them now.

"I turned and led the way to the higher part of the beach, where some fishing-boats were drawn up which completely screened us from the view of any one landing on the shore below. Seeing probably that I had a purpose of some kind, Manuel followed me without uttering a word. As soon as we were safely under the shelter of the boats, I forced myself, in my own defence, to look at him again.

"'What should you say,' I asked, 'if I was rich, instead of poor? What should you say if I could afford to give you a hundred pounds?'

"He started. I saw plainly that he had not expected so much as half the sum I had mentioned. It is needless to add that his tongue lied, while his face spoke the truth; and that when he replied to me, the answer was, 'Nothing like enough.'

"'Suppose,' I went on, without taking any notice of what he had said, 'that I could show you a way of helping yourself to twice as much—three times as much—five times as much as a hundred pounds, are you bold enough to put out your hand, and take it?'

"The greedy glitter came into his eyes once more. His voice dropped low, in breathless expectation of my next words.

" 'Who is the person?' he asked. 'And what is the risk?'

"I answered him at once, in the plainest terms. I threw Armadale to him, as I might have thrown a piece of meat to a wild beast who was pursuing me.

" 'The person is a rich young Englishman,' I said. 'He has just hired the yacht called the *Dorothea*, in the harbour here; and he stands in need of a sailing-master and a crew. You were once an officer in the Spanish navy—you speak English and Italian perfectly—you are thoroughly well acquainted with Naples and all that belongs to it. The rich young Englishman is ignorant of the language; and the interpreter who assists him, knows nothing of the sea. He is at his wits' end for want of useful help in this strange place; he has no more knowledge of the world than that child who is digging holes there with a stick in the sand; and he carries all his money with him in circular notes. So much for the person. As for the risk, estimate it for yourself.'

"The greedy glitter in his eyes grew brighter and brighter with every word I said. He was plainly ready to face the risk, before I had done speaking.

" 'When can I see the Englishman?' he asked eagerly.

"I moved to the seaward end of the fishing-boat, and saw that Armadale was at that moment disembarking on the shore.

" 'You can see him now,' I answered, and pointed to the place.

"After a long look at Armadale walking carelessly up the slope of the beach, Manuel drew back again under the shelter of the boat. He waited a moment, considering something carefully with himself, and put another question to me—in a whisper this time.

" 'When the vessel is manned,' he said, 'and the Englishman sails from Naples, how many friends sail with him?'

" 'He has but two friends here,' I replied—'that other gentleman whom you saw with me at the opera, and myself. He will invite us both to sail with him—and when the time comes, we shall both refuse.'

" 'Do you answer for that?'

" 'I answer for it positively.'

"He walked a few steps away, and stood with his face hidden from me, thinking again. All I could see was, that he took off his hat, and passed his handkerchief over his forehead. All I could hear was, that he talked to himself excitedly in his own language.

"There was a change in him when he came back. His face had turned to a livid yellow, and his eyes looked at me with a hideous distrust.

" 'One last question,' he said, and suddenly came closer to me, suddenly spoke with a marked emphasis on his next words, '*What is your interest in this?*'

"I started back from him. The question reminded me that I had an interest in the matter, which was entirely unconnected with the interest of

keeping Manuel and Midwinter apart. Thus far, I had only remembered that Midwinter's fatalism had smoothed the way for me, by abandoning Armadale beforehand to any stranger who might come forward to help him. Thus far, the sole object I had kept in view was to protect myself, by the sacrifice of Armadale, from the exposure that threatened me. I tell no lies to my Diary. I don't affect to have felt a moment's consideration for the interests of Armadale's purse, or the safety of Armadale's life. I hated him too savagely to care what pitfalls my tongue might be the means of opening under his feet. But I certainly did *not* see (until that last question was put to me) that, in serving his own designs, Manuel might—if he dared go all lengths for the money—be serving my designs too. The one overpowering anxiety to protect myself from exposure before Midwinter, had (I suppose) filled all my mind, to the exclusion of everything else.

"Finding that I made no reply for the moment, Manuel reiterated his question, putting it in a new form.

"'You have cast your Englishman at me,' he said, 'like the sop to Cerberus. Would you have been quite so ready to do that, if you had not had a motive of your own? I repeat my question. *You* have an interest in this—what is it?'

"'I have two interests,' I answered. 'The interest of forcing you to respect my position here; and the interest of ridding myself of the sight of you, at once and for ever!' I spoke with a boldness he had not yet heard from me. The sense that I was making the villain an instrument in my hands, and forcing him to help my purpose blindly, while he was helping his own, roused my spirits, and made me feel like myself again.

"He laughed. 'Strong language, on certain occasions, is a lady's privilege,' he said. 'You may, or may not, rid yourself of the sight of me, at once and for ever. We will leave that question to be settled in the future. But your other interest in this matter puzzles me. You have told me all I need know about the Englishman and his yacht, and you have made no conditions before you opened your lips. Pray, how are you to force me, as you say, to respect your position here?'

"'I will tell you how,' I rejoined. 'You shall hear my conditions first. I insist on your leaving me in five minutes more. I insist on your never again coming near the house where I live; and I forbid your attempting to communicate in any way, either with me, or with that other gentleman whom you saw with me at the theatre——'

"'And suppose I say no?' he interposed. 'In that case, what will you do?'

"'In that case,' I answered, 'I shall say two words in private to the rich young Englishman—and you will find yourself back again among the chorus at the opera.'

"'You are a bold woman to take it for granted that I have my designs on the Englishman already, and that I am certain to succeed in them. How do you know ——?'

" 'I know *you*,' I said. 'And that is enough.'

"There was a moment's silence between us. He looked at me—and I looked at him. We understood each other.

"He was the first to speak. The villanous smile died out of his face, and his voice dropped again distrustfully to its lowest tones.

" 'I accept your terms,' he said. 'As long as your lips are closed, my lips shall be closed too—except in the event of my finding that you have deceived me; in which case the bargain is at an end, and you will see me again. I shall present myself to the Englishman to-morrow, with the necessary credentials to establish me in his confidence. Tell me his name?'

"I told it.

" 'Give me his address?'

"I gave it—and turned to leave him. Before I had stepped out of the shelter of the boats, I heard him behind me again.

" 'One last word,' he said. 'Accidents sometimes happen at sea. Have you interest enough in the Englishman—if an accident happens in his case—to wish to know what has become of him?'

"I stopped, and considered on my side. I had plainly failed to persuade him that I had no secret interest to serve, in placing Armadale's money, and (as a probable consequence) Armadale's life, at his mercy. And it was now equally clear that he was cunningly attempting to associate himself with my private objects (whatever they might be), by opening a means of communication between us in the future. There could be no hesitation about how to answer him, under such circumstances as these. If the 'accident' at which he hinted did really happen to Armadale, I stood in no need of Manuel's intervention to give me the intelligence of it. An easy search through the obituary columns of the English papers would tell me the news—with the great additional advantage that the papers might be relied on, in such a matter as this, to tell the truth. I formally thanked Manuel, and declined to accept his proposal. 'Having no interest in the Englishman,' I said, 'I have no wish whatever to know what becomes of him.'

"He looked at me for a moment with steady attention, and with an interest in me which he had not shown yet.

" 'What the game you are playing may be,' he rejoined, speaking slowly and significantly, 'I don't pretend to know. But I venture on a prophecy nevertheless—you *will win it*! If we ever meet again, remember I said that.' He took off his hat, and bowed to me gravely. 'Go your way, madam. And leave me to go mine!'

"With those words, he released me from the sight of him. I waited a minute alone, to recover myself in the air—and then returned to the house.

"The first object that met my eyes on entering the sitting-room, was—Armadale himself!

"He was waiting on the chance of seeing me, to beg that I would exert my influence with his friend. I made the needful inquiry as to what he

meant, and found that Midwinter had spoken as he had warned me he would speak when he and Armadale next met. He had announced that he was unable to finish his work for the newspaper as soon as he had hoped; and he had advised Armadale to find a crew for the yacht without waiting for any assistance on his part.

"All that it was necessary for me to do, on hearing this, was to perform the promise I had made to Midwinter, when he gave me my directions how to act in the matter. Armadale's vexation on finding me resolved not to interfere, expressed itself in the form of all others that is most personally offensive to me. He declined to believe my reiterated assurances that I possessed no influence to exert in his favour. 'If I was married to Neele,' he said, 'she could do anything she liked with me, and I am sure, when you choose, you can do anything you like with Midwinter.' If the infatuated fool had actually tried to stifle the last faint struggles of remorse and pity left stirring in my heart, he could have said nothing more fatally to the purpose than this! I gave him a look which effectually silenced him so far as I was concerned. He went out of the room grumbling and growling to himself. 'It's all very well to talk about manning the yacht. I don't speak a word of their gibberish here—and the interpreter thinks a fisherman and a sailor mean the same thing. Hang me if I know what to do with the vessel, now I have got her!'

'He will probably know by to-morrow. And if he only comes here as usual, I shall know too!'

"October 25th, Ten at night—Manuel has got him!"

'He has just left us, after staying here more than an hour, and talking the whole time of nothing but his own wonderful luck in finding the very help he wanted, at the time when he needed it most.

"At noon to-day, he was on the Mole, it seems, with his interpreter, trying vainly to make himself understood by the vagabond population of the water-side. Just as he was giving it up in despair, a stranger standing by (Manuel had followed him, I suppose, to the Mole from his hotel) kindly interfered to put things right. He said, 'I speak your language and their language, sir. I know Naples well, and I have been professionally accustomed to the sea. Can I help you?' The inevitable result followed. Armadale shifted all his difficulties on to the shoulders of the polite stranger, in his usual helpless, headlong way. His new friend, however, insisted, in the most honourable manner, on complying with the customary formalities before he would consent to take the matter into his own hands. He begged leave to wait on Mr. Armadale, with his testimonials to character and capacity. The same afternoon he had come by appointment to the hotel, with all his papers, and with 'the saddest story' of his sufferings and privations as 'a political refugee' that Armadale had ever heard. The interview was decisive. Manuel left the hotel, commissioned to find a crew for the yacht, and to fill the post of sailing-master on the trial cruise.

"I watched Midwinter anxiously, while Armadale was telling us these particulars ; and afterwards, when he produced the new sailing-master's testimonials, which he had brought with him for his friend to see.

"For the moment, Midwinter's superstitious misgivings seemed to be all lost in his natural anxiety for his friend. He examined the stranger's papers—after having told me that the sooner Armadale was in the hands of strangers the better !—with the closest scrutiny and the most business-like distrust. It is needless to say that the credentials were as perfectly regular and satisfactory as credentials could be. When Midwinter handed them back, his colour rose : he seemed to feel the inconsistency of his conduct, and to observe for the first time that I was present noticing it. 'There is nothing to object to in the testimonials, Allan : I am glad you have got the help you want at last.' That was all he said, at parting. As soon as Armadale's back was turned, I saw no more of him. He has locked himself up again for the night, in his own room.

"There is now—so far as I am concerned—but one anxiety left. When the yacht is ready for sea, and when I decline to occupy the lady's cabin, will Midwinter hold to his resolution, and refuse to sail without me ?

"*October 26th.*—Warnings already of the coming ordeal. A letter from Armadale to Midwinter, which Midwinter has just sent in to me. Here it is :—

"'DEAR MID,—I am too busy to come to-day. Get on with your work, for heaven's sake ! The new sailing-master is a man of ten thousand. He has got an Englishman whom he knows, to serve as mate on board already ; and he is positively certain of getting the crew together in three or four days' time. I am dying for a whiff of the sea, and so are you, or you are no sailor. The rigging is set up, the stores are coming on board, and we shall bend the sails to-morrow or next day. I never was in such spirits in my life. Remember me to your wife, and tell her she will be doing me a favour if she will come at once, and order everything she wants in the lady's cabin.—Yours affectionately, A. A.'

"Under this was written in Midwinter's hand,—'Remember what I told you. Write (it will break it to him more gently in that way), and beg him to accept your apologies, and to excuse you from sailing on the trial cruise.'

"I have written without a moment's loss of time. The sooner Manuel knows (which he is certain to do through Armadale) that the promise not to sail in the yacht is performed already, so far as I am concerned, the safer I shall feel.

"*October 27th.*—A letter from Armadale,—in answer to mine. He is full of ceremonious regret at the loss of my company on the cruise ; and he politely hopes that Midwinter may yet induce me to alter my mind. Wait a little, till he finds that Midwinter won't sail with him either ! . . .

"October 30th.—Nothing new to record, until to-day. To-day, the change in our lives here has come at last!

"Armada!e presented himself this morning, in his noisiest high spirits, to announce that the yacht was ready for sea, and to ask when Midwinter would be able to go on board. I told him to make the inquiry himself in Midwinter's room. He left me, with a last request that I would reconsider my refusal to sail with him. I answered by a last apology for persisting in my resolution; and then took a chair alone at the window, to wait the event of the interview in the next room.

"My whole future depended, now, on what passed between Midwinter and his friend! Everything had gone smoothly up to this time. The one danger to dread was the danger of Midwinter's resolution, or rather of Midwinter's fatalism, giving way at the last moment. If he allowed himself to be persuaded into accompanying Armada!e on the cruise, Manuel's exasperation against me would hesitate at nothing—he would remember that I had answered to him for Armada!e's sailing from Naples alone; and he would be capable of exposing my whole past life to Midwinter before the vessel left the port. As I thought of this, and as the slow minutes followed each other, and nothing reached my ears but the hum of voices in the next room, my suspense became almost unendurable. It was vain to try and fix my attention on what was going on in the street. I sat looking mechanically out of the window, and seeing nothing.

"Suddenly—I can't say in how long, or how short a time—the hum of voices ceased; the door opened; and Armada!e showed himself on the threshold, alone.

"‘I wish you good-by,’ he said roughly. ‘And I hope, when I am married, my wife may never cause Midwinter the disappointment that Midwinter's wife has caused *me*!’

"He gave me an angry look, and made me an angry bow—and, turning sharply, left the room.

"I saw the people in the street again! I saw the calm sea, and the masts of the shipping in the harbour where the yacht lay! I could think, I could breathe freely once more! The words that saved me from Manuel—the words that might be Armada!e's sentence of death—had been spoken. The yacht was to sail without Midwinter, as well as without Me!

"My first feeling of exultation was almost maddening. But it was the feeling of a moment only. My heart sank in me again, when I thought of Midwinter alone in the next room.

"I went out into the passage to listen, and heard nothing. I tapped gently at his door, and got no answer. I opened the door, and looked in. He was sitting at the table, with his face hidden in his hands. I looked at him in silence—and saw the glistening of the tears, as they trickled through his fingers.

"‘Leave me,’ he said, without moving his hands. ‘I must get over it by myself.’

"I went back into the sitting-room. Who can understand women?—we don't even understand ourselves. His sending me away from him in that manner cut me to the heart. I don't believe the most harmless and most gentle woman living could have felt it more acutely than I felt it. And this, after what I have been doing! this, after what I was thinking of, the moment before I went into his room! Who can account for it? Nobody—I, least of all!

"Half an hour later, his door opened, and I heard him hurrying down the stairs. I ran out without waiting to think, and asked if I might go with him. He neither stopped nor answered. I went back to the window, and saw him pass, walking rapidly away, with his back turned on Naples and the sea.

"I can understand now, that he might not have heard me. At the time, I thought him inexcessably and brutally unkind to me. I put on my bonnet, in a frenzy of rage with him; I sent out for a carriage, and told the man to take me where he liked. He took me, as he took other strangers, to the Museum to see the statues and the pictures. I flounced from room to room, with my face in a flame, and the people all staring at me. I came to myself again, I don't know how. I returned to the carriage, and made the man drive me back in a violent hurry, I don't know why. I tossed off my cloak and bonnet, and sat down once more at the window. The sight of the sea cooled me. I forgot Midwinter, and thought of Armadale and his yacht. There wasn't a breath of wind; there wasn't a cloud in the sky—the wide waters of the Bay were as smooth as the surface of a glass.

"The sun sank; the short twilight came, and went. I had some tea, and sat at the table thinking and dreaming over it. When I roused myself and went back to the window, the moon was up—but the quiet sea was as quiet as ever.

"I was still looking out, when I saw Midwinter in the street below, coming back. I was composed enough by this time to remember his habits, and to guess that he had been trying to relieve the oppression on his mind by one of his long solitary walks. When I heard him go into his own room, I was too prudent to disturb him again—I waited his pleasure, where I was.

"Before long, I heard his window opened, and I saw him, from my window, step into the balcony, and after a look at the sea, hold up his hand to the air. I was too stupid, for the moment, to remember that he had once been a sailor, and to know what this meant. I waited, and wondered what would happen next.

"He went in again; and, after an interval, came out once more, and held up his hand as before, to the air. This time, he waited, leaning on the balcony rail, and looking out steadily, with all his attention absorbed by the sea.

"For a long, long time, he never moved. Then, on a sudden, I saw him start. The next moment, he sank on his knees, with his clasped

hands resting on the balcony rail. 'God Almighty bless and keep you, Allan!' he said fervently. 'Good-by for ever!'

"I looked out to the sea. A soft steady breeze was blowing, and the rippled surface of the water was sparkling in the quiet moonlight. I looked again—and there passed slowly, between me and the track of the moon, a long black vessel with tall shadowy ghost-like sails, gliding smooth and noiseless through the water, like a snake.

"The wind had come fair, with the night; and Armadale's yacht had sailed on the trial cruise.

CHAPTER III.

THE DIARY BROKEN OFF.

London, November 19th.—I am alone again in the Great City; alone, for the first time, since our marriage. Nearly a week since, I started on my homeward journey; leaving Midwinter behind me at Turin.

"The days have been so full of events since the month began, and I have been so harassed, in mind and body both, for the greater part of the time, that my Diary has been wretchedly neglected. A few notes, written in such hurry and confusion that I can hardly understand them myself, are all that I possess to remind me of what has happened, since the night when Armadale's yacht left Naples. Let me try if I can set this right, without more loss of time—let me try if I can recall the circumstances in their order as they have followed each other, from the beginning of the month.

"On the third of November—being then still at Naples—Midwinter received a hurried letter from Armadale, dated 'Messina.' 'The weather,' he said, 'had been lovely, and the yacht had made one of the quickest passages on record. The crew were rather a rough set to look at; but Captain Manuel, and his English mate,' (the latter described as 'the best of good fellows,') 'managed them admirably.' After this prosperous beginning, Armadale had arranged, as a matter of course, to prolong the cruise; and, at the sailing-master's suggestion, he had decided to visit some of the ports in the Adriatic, which the captain had described as full of character, and well worth seeing.

"A postscript followed, explaining that Armadale had written in a hurry to catch the steamer to Naples, and that he had opened his letter again, before sending it off, to add something that he had forgotten. On the day before the yacht sailed, he had been at the banker's to get 'a few hundreds in gold,' and he believed he had left his cigar-case there. It was an old friend of his, and he begged that Midwinter would oblige him by endeavouring to recover it, and keeping it for him till they met again."

"That was the substance of the letter.

"I thought over it carefully when Midwinter had left me alone again, after reading it. My idea was then (and is still) that Manuel had not persuaded Armadale to cruise in a sea like the Adriatic, so much less frequented by ships than the Mediterranean, for nothing. The terms, too, in which the trifling loss of the cigar-case was mentioned, struck me as being equally suggestive of what was coming. I concluded that Armadale's circular notes had not been transformed into those 'few hundreds in gold,' through any forethought or business-knowledge of his own. Manuel's influence, I suspected, had been exerted in this matter also—and once more not without reason. At intervals, through the wakeful night, these considerations came back again and again to me; and time after time they pointed obstinately (so far as my next movements were concerned) in one and the same way—the way back to England.

"How to get there, and especially how to get there unaccompanied by Midwinter, was more than I had wit enough to discover, that night. I tried, and tried, to meet the difficulty, and fell asleep exhausted towards the morning, without having met it.

"Some hours later, as soon as I was dressed, Midwinter came in, with news received by that morning's post from his employers in London. The proprietors of the newspaper had received from the editor so favourable a report of his correspondence from Naples, that they had determined on advancing him to a place of greater responsibility and greater emolument at Turin. His instructions were enclosed in the letter; and he was requested to lose no time in leaving Naples for his new post.

"On hearing this, I relieved his mind, before he could put the question, of all anxiety about my willingness to remove. Turin had the great attraction, in my eyes, of being on the road to England. I assured him at once that I was ready to travel as soon as he pleased.

"He thanked me for suiting myself to his plans, with more of his old gentleness and kindness than I had seen in him for some time past. The good news from Armadale on the previous day seemed to have roused him a little from the dull despair in which he had been sunk since the sailing of the yacht. And now, the prospect of advancement in his profession, and, more than that, the prospect of leaving the fatal place in which the third Vision of the Dream had come true, had (as he owned himself) additionally cheered and relieved him. He asked, before he went away to make the arrangements for our journey, whether I expected to hear from my 'family' in England, and whether he should give instructions for the forwarding of my letters with his own to the *poste restante* at Turin. I instantly thanked him, and accepted the offer. His proposal had suggested to me, the moment he made it, that my fictitious 'family circumstances' might be turned to good account once more, as a reason for unexpectedly summoning me from Italy to England.

"On the ninth of the month we were installed at Turin.

"On the thirteenth, Midwinter—being then very busy—asked it

I would save him a loss of time by applying for any letters which might have followed us from Naples. I had been waiting for the opportunity he now offered me; and I determined to snatch at it, without allowing myself time to hesitate. There were no letters at the *poste restante* for either of us. But, when he put the question on my return, I told him that there had been a letter for me, with alarming news from 'home.' My 'mother' was dangerously ill; and I was entreated to lose no time in hurrying back to England to see her.

"It seems quite unaccountable—now that I am away from him—but it is none the less true, that I could not, even yet, tell him a downright premeditated falsehood, without a sense of shrinking and shame, which other people would think, and which I think myself, utterly inconsistent with such a character as mine. Inconsistent or not, I felt it. And what is stranger—perhaps, I ought to say, madder—still, if he had persisted in his first resolution to accompany me himself to England, rather than allow me to travel alone, I firmly believe I should have turned my back on temptation for the second time, and have lulled myself to rest once more in the old dream of living out my life happy and harmless in my husband's love.

"Am I deceiving myself in this? It doesn't matter—I daresay I am. Never mind what *might* have happened. What *did* happen is the only thing of any importance now.

"It ended in Midwinter's letting me persuade him that I was old enough to take care of myself on the journey to England, and that he owed it to the newspaper people, who had trusted their interests in his hands, not to leave Turin just as he was established there. He didn't suffer at taking leave of me as he suffered when he saw the last of his friend. I saw that, and set down the anxiety he expressed that I should write to him, at its proper value. I have quite got over my weakness for him at last. No man who really loved me would have put what he owed to a pack of newspaper people before what he owed to his wife. I hate him for letting me convince him! I believe he was glad to get rid of me. I believe he has seen some woman whom he likes at Turin. Well, let him follow his new fancy, if he pleases! I shall be the widow of Mr. Armadale of Thorpe-Ambrose, before long—and what will his likes or dislikes matter to me then?

"The events on the journey were not worth mentioning, and my arrival in London stands recorded already on the top of the new page.

"As for to-day, the one thing of any importance that I have done, since I got to the cheap and quiet hotel at which I am now staying, has been to send for the landlord, and ask him to help me to a sight of the back numbers of *The Times* newspaper. He has politely offered to accompany me himself to-morrow morning to some place in the City where all the papers are kept, as he calls it, in file. Till to-morrow, then, I must control my impatience for news of Armadale as well as I can. And so good-night to the pretty reflection of myself that appears in these pages!

November 20th.—Not a word of news yet, either in the obituary column or in any other part of the paper. I looked carefully through each number in succession, dating from the day when Armadale's letter was written at Messina, to this present 20th of the month—and I am certain, whatever may have happened, that nothing is known in England as yet. Patience! The newspaper is to meet me at the breakfast-table every morning till further notice—and any day now may show me what I most want to see.

“November 21st.—No news again. I wrote to Midwinter to-day, to keep up appearances.

“When the letter was done, I fell into wretchedly low spirits—I can't imagine why—and felt such a longing for a little company, that, in despair of knowing where else to go, I actually went to Pimlico, on the chance that Mother Oldershaw might have returned to her old quarters.

“There were changes since I had seen the place during my former stay in London. Doctor Downward's side of the house was still empty. But the shop was being brightened up for the occupation of a milliner and dress-maker. The people, when I went in to make inquiries, were all strangers to me. They showed, however, no hesitation in giving me Mrs Oldershaw's address, when I asked for it—from which I infer that the little ‘difficulty’ which forced her to be in hiding in August last, is at an end, so far as she is concerned. As for the doctor, the people at the shop either were, or pretended to be, quite unable to tell me what had become of him.

“I don't know whether it was the sight of the place at Pimlico that sickened me, or whether it was my own perversity, or what. But now that I had got Mrs. Oldershaw's address, I felt as if she was the very last person in the world that I wanted to see. I took a cab, and told the man to drive to the street she lived in, and then told him to drive back to the hotel. I hardly know what is the matter with me—unless it is that I am getting more impatient every hour for information about Armadale. When will the future look a little less dark, I wonder? To-morrow is Saturday. Will to-morrow's newspaper lift the veil?

November 22nd.—Saturday's newspaper has lifted the veil! Words are vain to express the panic of astonishment in which I write. I never once anticipated it—I can't believe it or realize it now it has happened. The winds and waves themselves have turned my accomplices! The yacht has foundered at sea, and every soul on board has perished!

“Here is the account cut out of this morning's newspaper:—

*“DISASTER AT SEA.—Intelligence has reached the Royal Yacht Squadron and the insurers, which leaves no reasonable doubt, we regret to say, of the total loss, on the fifth of the present month, of the yacht *Dorothea*, with every soul on board. The particulars are as follow:—At daylight, on the morning of the sixth, the Italian brig *Speranza*, bound from Venice to Marsala for orders, encountered some floating objects off Cape Spatavento (at the southernmost extremity of Italy) which attracted the curiosity of the people of the brig. The previous day had been marked by one of the*

most severe of the sudden and violent storms, peculiar to these southern seas, which has been remembered for years. The *Speranza* herself having been in danger while the gale lasted, the captain and crew concluded that they were on the traces of a wreck, and a boat was lowered for the purpose of examining the objects in the water. A honecoop, some broken spars, and fragments of shattered plank were the first evidences discovered of the terrible disaster that had happened. Some of the lighter articles of cabin furniture, wrenched and shattered, were found next. And, lastly, a memento of melancholy interest turned up, in the shape of a life-buoy, with a corked bottle attached to it. These latter objects, with the relics of cabin-furniture, were brought on board the *Speranza*. On the buoy the name of the vessel was painted as follows:—‘*Dorothea*, R.Y.S.’ (meaning Royal Yacht Squadron) The bottle, on being uncorked, contained a sheet of note-paper, on which the following lines were hurriedly traced in pencil:—‘Off Cape Spartivento; two days out from Messina. Nov. 5th, 4 P.M.’ (being the hour at which the log of the Italian brig showed the storm to have been at its height). ‘Both our boats are stove in by the sea. The rudder is gone, and we have sprung a leak astern which is more than we can stop. The Lord help us all—we are sinking. (Signed) John Mitchenden, mate.’ On reaching Marsala, the captain of the brig made his report to the British consul, and left the objects discovered in that gentleman’s charge. Inquiry at Messina showed that the ill-fated vessel had arrived there from Naples. At the latter port it was ascertained that the *Dorothea* had been hired from the owner’s agent, by an English gentleman, Mr. Armadale, of Thorpe-Ambrose, Norfolk. Whether Mr. Armadale had any friends on board with him has not been clearly discovered. But there is unhappily no doubt that the ill-fated gentleman himself sailed in the yacht from Naples, and that he was also on board of the vessel when she left Messina.”

“Such is the story of the wreck, as the newspaper tells it in the plainest and fewest words. My head is in a whirl; my confusion is so great that I think of fifty different things, in trying to think of one. I must wait—a day more or less is of no consequence now—I must wait till I can face my new position, without feeling bewildered by it.

“*November 23rd, Eight in the Morning.*—I rose an hour ago, and saw my way clearly to the first step that I must take, under present circumstances.

“It is of the utmost importance to me to know what is doing at Thorpe-Ambrose; and it would be the height of rashness, while I am quite in the dark in this matter, to venture there myself. The only other alternative is to write to somebody on the spot for news; and the only person I can write to is—Bashwood.

“I have just finished the letter. It is headed ‘private and confidential,’ and signed ‘Lydia Armadale.’ There is nothing in it to compromise me, if the old fool is mortally offended by my treatment of him, and if he spitefully shows my letter to other people. But I don’t believe he will do this. A man at his age forgives a woman anything, if the woman only encourages him. I have requested him, as a personal favour, to keep our correspondence for the present strictly private. I have hinted that my married life with my deceased husband has not been a happy one; and that I feel the injudiciousness of having married a young man. In the postscript I go farther still, and venture boldly on these comforting words,—

'I can explain, dear Mr. Bashwood, what may have seemed false and deceitful in my conduct towards you, when you give me a personal opportunity.' If he was on the right side of sixty I should feel doubtful of results. But he is on the wrong side of sixty, and I believe he will give me my personal opportunity.

"*Ten o'clock.*—I have been looking over the copy of my marriage-certificate, with which I took care to provide myself on the wedding-day; and I have discovered, to my inexpressible dismay, an obstacle to my appearance in the character of Armadale's widow, which I now see for the first time.

"The description of Midwinter (under his own name) which the certificate presents, answers in every important particular, to what would have been the description of Armadale of Thorpe-Ambrose, if I had really married him. 'Name and Surname'—Allan Armadale. 'Age' twenty-one, instead of twenty-two, which might easily pass for a mistake. 'Condition'—Bachelor. 'Rank or Profession'—Gentleman. 'Residence at the time of Marriage'—Frant's Hotel, Darley-street. 'Father's Name and Surname'—Allan Armadale. 'Rank or Profession of Father'—Gentleman. Every particular (except the year's difference in their two ages) which answers for the one, answers for the other. But, suppose when I produce my copy of the certificate, that some meddlesome lawyer insists on looking at the original register? Midwinter's writing is as different as possible from the writing of his dead friend. The hand in which he has written 'Allan Armadale' in the book, has not a chance of passing for the hand in which Armadale of Thorpe-Ambrose was accustomed to sign his name.

"Can I move safely in the matter, with such a pitfall as I see here, open under my feet? How can I tell? Where can I find an experienced person to inform me? I must shut up my diary, and think.

"*Seven o'clock.*—My prospects have changed again since I made my last entry. I have received a warning to be careful in the future, which I shall not neglect; and I have (I believe) succeeded in providing myself with the advice and assistance of which I stand in need.

"After vainly trying to think of some better person to apply to in the difficulty which embarrassed me, I made a virtue of necessity, and set forth to surprise Mrs. Oldershaw by a visit from her darling Lydia! It is almost needless to add that I determined to sound her carefully, and not to let any secret of importance out of my own possession.

"A sour and solemn old maid-servant admitted me into the house. When I asked for her mistress, I was reminded with the bitterest emphasis, that I had committed the impropriety of calling on a Sunday. Mrs. Oldershaw was at home, solely in consequence of being too unwell to go to church! The servant thought it very unlikely that she would see me. I thought it highly probable, on the contrary, that she would honour me

with an interview in her own interests, if I sent in my name as 'Miss Gwilt,'—and the event proved that I was right. After being kept waiting some minutes I was shown into the drawing-room.

"There sat mother Jezebel, with the air of a woman resting on the high-road to heaven, dressed in a slate-coloured gown, with grey mittens on her hands, a severely simple cap on her head, and a volume of sermons on her lap. She turned up the whites of her eyes devoutly at the sight of me, and the first words she said were—'Oh, Lydia! Lydia! why are you not at church?'"

"If I had been less anxious, the sudden presentation of Mrs. Oldershaw, in an entirely new character, might have amused me. But I was in no humour for laughing, and (my notes-of-hand being all paid), I was under no obligation to restrain my natural freedom of speech. 'Stuff and nonsense!' I said. 'Put your Sunday face in your pocket. I have got some news for you, since I last wrote from Thorpe-Ambrose.'

"The instant I mentioned 'Thorpe-Ambrose,' the whites of the old hypocrite's eyes showed themselves again, and she flatly refused to hear a word more from me on the subject of my proceedings in Norfolk. I insisted—but it was quite useless. Mother Oldershaw only shook her head and groaned, and informed me that her connection with the pomps and vanities of the world was at an end for ever. 'I have been born again, Lydia,' said the brazen old wretch, wiping her eyes. 'Nothing will induce me to return to the subject of that wicked speculation of yours on the folly of a rich young man.'

"After hearing this, I should have left her on the spot, but for one consideration which delayed me a moment longer.

"It was easy to see, by this time, that the circumstances (whatever they might have been) which had obliged Mother Oldershaw to keep in hiding, on the occasion of my former visit to London, had been sufficiently serious to force her into giving up, or appearing to give up, her old business. And it was hardly less plain that she had found it to her advantage—everybody in England finds it to their advantage, in some way—to cover the outer side of her character carefully with a smooth varnish of Cant. This was, however, no business of mine; and I should have made these reflections outside, instead of inside the house, if my interests had not been involved in putting the sincerity of Mother Oldershaw's reformation to the test—so far as it affected her past connection with myself. At the time when she had fitted me out for our enterprise, I remembered signing a certain business-document which gave her a handsome pecuniary interest in my success, if I became Mrs. Armadale of Thorpe-Ambrose. The chance of turning this mischievous morsel of paper to good account, in the capacity of a touchstone, was too tempting to be resisted. I asked my devout friend's permission to say one last word, before I left the house.

"'As you have no further interest in my wicked speculation at Thorpe-Ambrose,' I said, 'perhaps you will give me back the written

paper that I signed, when you were not quite such an exemplary person as you are now ?'

"The shameless old hypocrite instantly shut her eyes and shuddered.

"Does that mean Yes, or No ?' I asked.

"On moral and religious grounds, Lydia,' said Mrs. Oldershaw, 'it means No.'

"On wicked and worldly grounds,' I rejoined, 'I beg to thank you for showing me your hand.'

"There could, indeed, be no doubt, now, about the object she really had in view. She would run no more risks and lend no more money—she would leave me to win or lose, single-handed. If I lost, she would not be compromised. If I won, she would produce the paper I had signed, and profit by it without remorse. In my present situation it was mere waste of time and words to prolong the matter by any useless recrimination on my side. I put the warning away privately in my memory for future use, and got up to go.

"At the moment when I left my chair, there was a sharp double knock at the street-door. Mrs. Oldershaw evidently recognized it. She rose in a violent hurry and rang the bell. 'I am too unwell to see anybody,' she said, when the servant appeared. 'Wait a moment, if you please,' she added, turning sharply on me, when the woman had left us to answer the door.

"It was small, very small, spitefulness on my part, I know—but the satisfaction of thwarting Mother Jezebel, even in a trifle, was not to be resisted. 'I can't wait,' I said ; 'you reminded me just now that I ought to be at church.' Before she could answer, I was out of the room.

"As I put my foot on the first stair the street-door was opened ; and a man's voice inquired whether Mrs. Oldershaw was at home.

"I instantly recognized the voice. Doctor Downward !

The Study of Celtic Literature.

PART II

I SAID that a sceptic like Mr. Nash, by demolishing the rubbish of the Celtic antiquaries, might often give himself the appearance of having won a complete victory, but that a complete victory he had, in truth, by no means won. He has cleared much rubbish away, but this is no such very difficult feat, and requires mainly common-sense ; to be sure, Welsh archæologists are apt to lose their common-sense, but at moments when they are in possession of it, they can do the indispensable, negative part of criticism, not, indeed, so briskly or cleverly as Mr. Nash, but still well enough. Edward Davies, for instance, has quite clearly seen that the alleged remains of old Welsh literature are not to be taken for genuine just as they stand:—"Some petty and mendicant minstrel, who only chaunted it as an old song, has tacked on" (he says of a poem he is discussing) "these lines, in a style and measure totally different from the preceding verses : 'May the Trinity grant us mercy in the day of judgment: a liberal donation, good gentlemen!'" There, fifty years before Mr. Nash, is a clearance very like one of Mr. Nash's. But the difficult feat in this matter is the feat of construction ; to determine when one has cleared away all that is to be cleared away, what is the significance of that which is left ; and here, I confess, I think Mr. Nash and his fellow-sceptics, who say that next to nothing is left, and that the significance of whatever is left is next to nothing, dissatisfy the genuine critic even more than Edward Davies and his brother enthusiasts, who have a sense that something primitive, august, and interesting is there, though they fail to extract it, dissatisfy him. There is a very edifying story told by O'Curry of the effect produced on Moore, the poet, who had undertaken to write the history of Ireland (a task for which he was quite unfit), by the contemplation of an old Irish manuscript. Moore had, without knowing anything about them, spoken slightly of the value to the historian of Ireland of the materials afforded by such manuscripts ; but, says O'Curry,—

"In the year 1839, during one of his last visits to the land of his birth, he, in company with his old and attached friend Dr. Petrie, favoured me with an unexpected visit at the Royal Irish Academy. I was at that period employed on the Ordnance Survey of Ireland, and at the time of his visit happened to have before me on my desk the *Books of Ballymote and Lecain*, *The Speckled Book*, *The Annals of the Four Masters*, and many other ancient books, for historical research and reference. I had never before seen Moore, and after a brief introduction and explanation of the nature of my occupation by Dr. Petrie, and seeing

the formidable array of so many dark and time-worn volumes by which I was surrounded, he looked a little disconcerted, but after a while plucked up courage to open the *Book of Ballymote* and ask what it was. Dr. Petrie and myself then entered into a short explanation of the history and character of the books then present as well as of ancient Gaedhelic documents in general. Moore listened with great attention, alternately scanning the books and myself, and then asked me, in a serious tone, if I understood them, and how I had learned to do so. Having satisfied him upon these points, he turned to Dr. Petrie and said: 'Petrie, these huge tomes could not have been written by fools or for any foolish purpose. I never knew anything about them before, and I had no right to have undertaken the *History of Ireland*.'

And from that day Moore, it is said, lost all heart for going on with his *History of Ireland*, and it was only the importunity of the publishers which induced him to bring out the remaining volume.

Could not have been written by fools, or for any foolish purpose. That is, I am convinced, a true presentiment to have in one's mind when one looks at Irish documents like the *Book of Ballymote*, or Welsh documents like the *Red Book of Hergest*. In some respects, at any rate, these documents are what they claim to be, they hold what they pretend to hold, they touch that primitive world of which they profess to be the voice. The true critic is he who can detect this precious and genuine part in them, and employ it for the elucidation of the Celt's genius and history, and for any other fruitful purposes to which it can be applied. Merely to point out the mixture of what is late and spurious in them, is to touch but the fringes of the matter. In reliance upon the discovery of this mixture of what is late and spurious in them, to pooh-pooh them altogether, to treat them as a heap of rubbish, a mass of middle-age forgeries, is to fall into the greatest possible error. Granted that all the manuscripts of Welsh poetry (to take that branch of Celtic literature which has had, in Mr. Nash, the ablest disparager), granted that all such manuscripts that we possess are, with the most insignificant exception, not older than the twelfth century; granted that the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were a time of great poetical activity in Wales, a time when a mediæval literature flourished there, as it flourished in England, France, and other countries; granted that a great deal of what Welsh enthusiasts have attributed to their great traditional poets of the sixth century belongs to this later epoch,—what then? Does that get rid of the great traditional poets,—the Cynveirdd or old bards, Aneurin, Taliesin, Llywarch Hen, and their compeers,—does that get rid of the great poetical tradition of the sixth century altogether; does it merge the whole literary antiquity of Wales in her mediæval literary antiquity, or, at least, reduce all other than this to insignificance? Mr. Nash says it does; all his efforts are directed to show how much of the so-called sixth-century pieces may be resolved into mediæval, twelfth-century work; his grand thesis is that there is nothing primitive and pre-Christian in the

extant Welsh literature, no traces of the Druidism and Paganism every one associates with Celtic antiquity; all this, he says, was extinguished by Paulinus in A.D. 59, and never resuscitated. "At the time the *Mabinogion* and the *Taliesin* ballads were composed, no tradition or popular recollection of the Druids or the Druidical mythology existed in Wales. The Welsh bards knew of no older mystery, nor of any mystic creed, unknown to the rest of the Christian world." And Mr. Nash complains that "the old opinion that the Welsh poems contain notices of Druid or Pagan superstitions of a remote origin" should still find promulgators; what we find in them is only, he says, what was circulating in Wales in the twelfth century, and "one great mistake in these investigations has been the supposing that the Welsh of the twelfth, or even of the sixth century, were wiser as well as more Pagan than their neighbours."

Why, what a wonderful thing is this! We have, in the first place, the most weighty and explicit testimony—Strabo's, Cæsar's, Lucan's—that this race once possessed a special, profound, spiritual discipline, that they were, to use Mr. Nash's words, "wiser than their neighbours." Lucan's words are singularly clear and strong, and serve well to stand as a landmark in this controversy, in which one is sometimes embarrassed by hearing authorities quoted on this side or that, when one does not feel sure precisely what they say—how much or how little; Lucan, addressing those hitherto under the pressure of Rome, but now left by the Roman civil war to their own devices, says :—

"Ye too, ye bards, who by your praises perpetuate the memory of the fallen brave, without hindrance poured forth your strains. And ye, ye Druids, now that the sword was removed, began once more your barbaric rites and weird solemnities. To you only is given knowledge or ignorance (whichever it be) of the gods and the powers of heaven; your dwelling is in the lone heart of the forest. From you we learn, that the bourne of man's ghost is not the senseless grave, not the pale realm of the monarch below; in another world his spirit survives still;—death, if your lore be true, is but the passage to enduring life."

There is the testimony of an educated Roman, fifty years after Christ, to the Celtic race being then "wiser than their neighbours;" testimony all the more remarkable because civilized nations, though very prone to ascribe to barbarous people an ideal purity and simplicity of life and manners, are by no means naturally inclined to ascribe to them high attainment in intellectual and spiritual things. And now, along with this testimony of Lucan's, one has to carry in mind Cæsar's remark, that the Druids, partly from a religious scruple, partly from a desire to discipline the memory of their pupils, committed nothing to writing. Well, then comes the crushing defeat of the Celtic race in Britain, and the Roman conquest; but the Celtic race subsisted here still, and any one can see that while the race subsisted, the traditions of a discipline such as that of which Lucan has drawn the picture, were not likely to be so very speedily "extinguished." The withdrawal of the Romans, the recovered indepen-

dence of the native race here, the Saxon invasion, the struggle with the Saxons, were just the ground for one of those bursts of energetic national life and self-consciousness, which find a voice in a burst of poets and poetry. Accordingly, to this time, to the sixth century, the universal Welsh tradition attaches the great group of British poets, Taliesin and his fellows. In the twelfth century there began for Wales, along with another burst of national life, another burst of poetry; and this burst *literary* in the stricter sense of the word—a burst which left, for the first time, written records. It wrote the records of its predecessors, as well as of itself, and therefore Mr. Nash wants to make it the real author of the whole poetry, one may say, of the sixth century, as well as its own. No doubt one cannot produce the texts of the poetry of the sixth century; no doubt we have this only as the twelfth and succeeding centuries wrote it down; no doubt they mixed and changed it a great deal in writing it down. But, since a continuous stream of testimony shows the enduring existence and influence among the kindred Celts of Wales and Brittany, from the sixth century to the twelfth, of an old national literature, it seems certain that much of this must be traceable in the documents of the twelfth century, and the interesting thing is to trace it. It cannot be denied that there is such a continuous stream of testimony; there is Gildas in the sixth century, Nennius in the eighth, the laws of Howel in the tenth; in the eleventh, twenty or thirty years before the new literary epoch began, we hear of Rhys ap Tudor having "brought with him from Brittany, the system of the Round Table, which at home had become quite forgotten, and he restored it as it is, with regard to minstrels and bards, as it had been at Caerlon-upon-Usk, under the Emperor Arthur, in the time of the sovereignty of the race of the Cymry over the island of Britain and its adjacent islands." Mr. Nash's own comment on this is: "We here see the introduction of the Arthurian romance from Brittany, preceding by nearly one generation, the revival of music and poetry in North Wales," and yet he does not seem to perceive what a testimony is here to the reality, fulness, and subsistence of that primitive literature about which he is so sceptical. Then in the twelfth century testimony to this primitive literature absolutely abounds; one can quote none better than that of Giraldus de Barri, or Giraldus Cambrensis, as he is usually called. Giraldus is an excellent authority, who knew well what he was writing about, and he speaks of the Welsh bards and rhapsodists of his time as having in their possession "ancient and authentic books" in the Welsh language. The apparatus of technical terms of poetry, again, and the elaborate poetical organization which we find, both in Wales and Ireland, existing from the very commencement of the mediæval literary period in each, and to which no other mediæval literature, so far as I know, shows at its first beginnings anything similar, indicates surely, in these Celtic peoples, the clear and persistent tradition of an older poetical period of great development, and almost irresistibly connects itself in one's mind with the elaborate Druidic discipline which Cæsar mentions.

But perhaps the best way to get a full sense of the storied antiquity, forming as it were the background to those mediæval documents, which in Mr. Nash's eyes pretty much begin and end with themselves, is to take, almost at random, a passage from such a tale as *Kilhwch and Olwen*, in the *Mabinogion*—that charming collection, for which we owe such a debt of gratitude to Lady Charlotte Guest (to call her still by the name she bore when she made her happy entry into the world of letters), and which she so unkindly suffers to remain out of print. Almost every page of this tale points to traditions and personages of the most remote antiquity, and is instinct with the very breath of the primitive world. Search is made for Mabon, the son of Modron, who was taken when three nights old from between his mother and the wall. The seekers go first to the Ousel of Cilgwri : the Ousel had lived long enough to peck a smith's anvil down to the size of a nut, but he had never heard of Mabon. "But there is a race of animals who were formed before me, and I will be your guide to them." So the Ousel guides them to the Stag of Redynvre. The Stag had seen an oak sapling, in the wood where he lived, grow up to be an oak with a hundred branches, and then slowly decay down to a withered stump, yet he had never heard of Mabon. "But I will be your guide to the place where there is an animal which was formed before I was ;" and he guides them to the Owl of Cwn Cawlwyd. "When first I came hither," says the Owl, "the wide valley you see was a wooded glen. And a race of men came and rooted it up. And there grew a second wood ; and this wood is the third. My wings, are they not withered stumps?" Yet the Owl, in spite of his great age, had never heard of Mabon ; but he offered to be guide "to where is the oldest animal in the world, and the one that has travelled most, the Eagle of Gwern Abwy." The Eagle was so old, that a rock, from the top of which he pecked at the stars every evening, was now not so much as a span high. He knew nothing of Mabon ; but there was a monster salmon, into whom he once struck his claws in Llyn Llyw, who might, perhaps, tell them something of him. And at last the Salmon of Llyn Llyw told them of Mabon. "With every tide I go along the river upwards, until I come near to the walls of Gloucester, and there have I found such wrong as I never found elsewhere." And the Salmon took Arthur's messengers on his shoulders up to the wall of the prison in Gloucester, and they delivered Mabon.

Nothing could better give that sense of primitive and pre-mediæval antiquity which to the observer with any tact for these things is, I think, clearly perceptible in these remains, at whatever time they may have been written, or better serve to check too absolute an acceptance of Mr. Nash's doctrine—in some respects very salutary—"that the common assumption of such remains of the date of the sixth century, has been made upon very unsatisfactory grounds." It is true it has ; it is true, too, that, as he goes on to say, "writers who claim for productions actually existing only in manuscripts of the twelfth, an origin in the sixth century,

are called upon to demonstrate the links of evidence, either internal or external, which bridge over this great intervening period of at least five hundred years." Then Mr. Nash continues: "This external evidence is altogether wanting." Not altogether, as we have seen; that assertion is a little too strong. But I am content to let it pass, because it is true, that without internal evidence in this matter the external evidence would be of no moment. But when Mr. Nash continues further: "And the internal evidence even of the so-called historic poems themselves, is, in some instances at least, opposed to their claims to an origin in the sixth century," and leaves the matter there, and finishes his chapter, I say that is an unsatisfactory turn to give to the matter, and a lame and impotent conclusion to his chapter; because the one interesting, fruitful question here is, not in what instances the internal evidence opposes the claims of these poems to a sixth-century origin, but in what instances it supports them, and what these sixth-century remains, thus established, signify.

So again with the question as to the mythological import of these poems. Mr. Nash seems to me to have dealt with this, too, rather in the spirit of a sturdy enemy of the Celts and their pretensions,—often enough chimerical,—than in the spirit of a disinterested man of science. "We find in the oldest compositions in the Welsh language no traces," he says, "of the Druids, or of a pagan mythology." He will not hear of there being, for instance, in these compositions, traces of the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, attributed to the Druids in such clear words by Cæsar. He is very severe upon a German scholar, long and favourably known in this country, who has already furnished valuable contributions to our knowledge of the Celtic race, and of whose labours the main fruit has, I believe, not yet been given us—Mr. Meyer. He is very severe upon Mr. Meyer, for finding in one of the poems ascribed to Taliesin, "a sacrificial hymn addressed to the god Pryd, in his character of god of the Sun." It is not for me to pronounce for or against this notion of Mr. Meyer's. I have not the knowledge which is needed in order to make one's suffrage in these matters of any value; speaking merely as one of the unlearned public, I will confess that allegory seems to me to play, in Mr. Meyer's theories, a somewhat excessive part; Arthur and his Twelve (?) Knights of the Round Table signifying solely the year with its twelve months; Percival and the Miller signifying solely steel and the grindstone; Stonehenge and the *Gododin* put to purely calendarial purposes; the *Nibelungen*, the *Mahabharata*, and the *Iliad*, finally following the fate of the *Gododin*; all this appears to me, I will confess, a little prematurely grasped, a little unsubstantial. But that any one who knows the set of modern mythological science towards astronomical and solar myths, a set which has already justified itself in many respects so victoriously, and which is so irresistible that one can hardly now look up at the sun without having the sensations of a moth; that any one who knows this, should find in the Welsh remains no traces of mythology, is quite astounding. Why, the heroes and heroines of

the old Cymric world are all in the sky as well as in Welsh story; Arthur is the Great Bear, his harp is the constellation Lyra; Cassiopeia's chair is Llys Don, Don's Court; the daughter of Don was Arianrod, and the Northern Crown is Caer Arianrod; Gwydion was Don's son, and the Milky Way is Caer Gwydion. With Gwydion is Math, the son of Muthonwy, the "man of illusion and phantasy;" and the moment one goes below the surface—almost before one goes below the surface—all is illusion and phantasy, double-meaning, and far-reaching mythological import, in the world which all these personages inhabit. What are the three hundred ravens of Owen, and the nine sorceresses of Peredur, and the dogs of Annwn, the Welsh Hades, and the birds of Rhiannon, whose song was so sweet that warriors remained spell-bound for eighty years together listening to them? What is the Avanc, the water-monster, of whom every lake-side in Wales, and her proverbial speech, and her music, to this day preserve the tradition? What is Gwyn the son of Nudd, king of fairie, the ruler of the Tylwyth Teg, or family of beauty, who till the day of doom fights on every first day of May—the great feast of the sun among the Celtic peoples—with Gwythyr for the fair Cordelia, the daughter of Lear? What is the wonderful mare of Teirnyon, which on the night of every first of May foaled, and no one ever knew what became of the colt? Who is the mystic Arawn, the king of Annwn, who changed semblance for a year with Pwyll, prince of Dyved, and reigned in his place? These are no mediæval personages; they belong to an older, pagan, mythological world. The very first thing that strikes one, in reading the *Mabinogion*, is how evidently the mediæval story-teller is pillaging an antiquity of which he does not fully possess the secret; he is like a peasant building his hut on the site of Halicarnassus or Ephesus; he builds, but what he builds is full of materials of which he knows not the history, or knows by a glimmering tradition merely;—stones "not of this building," but of an older architecture, greater, cunninger, more majestic. In the mediæval stories of no Latin or Teutonic people does this strike one as in those of the Welsh. Kilhwch, in the story already quoted of *Kilhwch and Olwen*, asks help at the hand of Arthur's warriors; a list of these warriors is given, which fills I know not how many pages of Lady Charlotte Guest's book; this list is a perfect treasure-house of mysterious ruins:—

"Teithi Hen, the son of Gwynhan—(his domains were swallowed up by the sea, and he himself hardly escaped, and he came to Arthur, and his knife had this peculiarity, that from the time that he came there no haft would ever remain upon it, and owing to this a sickness came over him and he pined away during the remainder of his life, and of this he died).

"Drem, the son of Dremidyd—(when the gnat arose in the morning with the sun, Drem could see it from Gelli Wic in Cornwall, as far off as Pen Blathaon in North Britain).

"Kynyr Keinvarvawc—(when he was told he had a son born, he said to his wife: Damsel, if thy son be mine, his heart will be always cold, and there will be no warmth in his hands)."

How evident, again, is the slightness of the narrator's hold upon the Twrch-Trwyth and his strange story! How manifest the mixture of known and unknown, shadowy and clear, of different layers and orders of tradition jumbled together, in the story of Bran the Blessed, a story whose personages touch a comparatively late and historic time. Bran invades Ireland, to avenge one of "the three unhappy blows of this island," the daily striking of Branwen by her husband Matholwch, king of Ireland. Bran is mortally wounded by a poisoned dart, and only seven men of Britain, "the Island of the Mighty," escape, among them Taliesin.

"And Bran commanded them that they should cut off his head. And take you my head, said he, and bear it even unto the White Mount in London, and bury it there with the face towards France. And a long time will you be upon the road. In Harlech you will be feasting seven years, the birds of Rhiannon singing unto you the while. And all that time the head will be to you as pleasant company as it ever was when on my body. And at Gwales in Penvro you will be fourscore years, and you may remain there, and the head with you uncorrupted, until you open the door that looks towards Aber Henvelen and towards Cornwall. And after you have opened that door, there you may no longer tarry; set forth then to London to bury the head, and go straight forward.

"So they cut off his head, and those seven went forward therewith. And Branwen was the eighth with them, and they came to land at Aber Alaw in Anglesey, and they sat down to rest. And Branwen looked towards Ireland and towards the Island of the Mighty, to see if she could descry them. 'Alas,' said she, 'woe is me that I was ever born; two islands have been destroyed because of me.' Then she uttered a loud groan, and there broke her heart. And they made her a four-sided grave, and buried her upon the banks of the Alaw.

"Then they went on to Harlech, and sat down to feast and to drink there; and there came three birds and began singing, and all the songs they had ever heard were harsh compared thereto; and at this feast they continued seven years. Then they went to Gwales in Penvro, and there they found a fair and regal spot overlooking the ocean, and a spacious hall was therein. And they went into the hall, and two of its doors were open, but the third door was closed, that which looked towards Cornwall. 'See yonder,' said Manawyddan, 'is the door that we may not open.' And that night they regaled themselves and were joyful. And there they remained fourscore years, nor did they think they had ever spent a time more joyous and mirthful. And they were not more weary than when first they came, neither did they, any of them, know the time they had been there. And it was as pleasant to them having the head with them as if Bran had been with them himself.

"But one day said Heilyn, the son of Gwyn: 'Evil betide me if I do not open the door to know if that is true which is said concerning it.' So he opened the door and looked towards Cornwall and Aber Henvelen. And when they had looked, they were as conscious of all the evils they

had ever sustained, and of all the friends and companions they had lost, and of all the misery that had befallen them, as if all had happened in that very spot; and especially of the fate of their lord. And because of their perturbation, they could not rest, but journeyed forth with the head towards London. And they buried the head in the White Mount."

Arthur afterwards, in his pride and self-confidence, disinterred the head, and this was one of "the three unhappy disclosures of the island of Britain."

There is evidently mixed here, with the newer legend, a *detritus*, as the geologists would say, of something far older; and the secret of Wales and its genius is not truly reached until this *detritus*, instead of being called recent because it is found in contact with what is recent, is disengaged, and is made to tell its own story.

But when we show him things of this kind in the Welsh remains, Mr. Nash has an answer for us. "Oh," he says, "all this is merely a machinery of necromancers and magic, such as has probably been possessed by all people in all ages, more or less abundantly. How similar are the creations of the human mind in times and places the most remote! We see in this similarity only an evidence of the existence of a common stock of ideas, variously developed according to the formative pressure of external circumstances. The materials of these tales are not peculiar to the Welsh." And then Mr. Nash points out, with much learning and ingenuity, how certain incidents of these tales have their counterparts in Irish, in Scandinavian, in Oriental romance. He says, fairly enough, that the assertions of Taliesin, in the famous *Ianes Taliesin* or *History of Taliesin*, that he was present with Noah in the Ark, at the Tower of Babel, and with Alexander of Macedon, "we may ascribe to the poetic fancy of the Christian priest of the thirteenth century, who brought this romance into its present form. We may compare these statements of the gleeman who recites the Anglo-Saxon metrical tale called the *Traveller's Song*." No doubt lands the most distant can be shown to have a common property in many marvellous stories. This is one of the most interesting discoveries of modern science; but modern science is equally interested in knowing how the genius of each people has differentiated, so to speak, this common property of theirs; in tracking out, in each case, that special "variety of development," which, to use Mr. Nash's own words, "the formative pressure of external circumstances" has occasioned; and not the formative pressure from without only, but also the formative pressure from within. It is this which he who deals with the Welsh remains in a philosophic spirit wants to know. Where is the force, for scientific purposes, of telling us that certain incidents by which Welsh poetry has been supposed to indicate a surviving tradition of the doctrine of transmigration, are found in Irish poetry also, when Irish poetry has, like Welsh, its roots in that Celtism which is said to have held this doctrine of transmigration so strongly? Where is even the great force, for scientific purposes, of

proving, if it were possible to prove, that the extant remains of Welsh poetry contain not one plain declaration of Druidical, pagan, pre-Christian doctrine, if one has in the extant remains of Breton poetry such texts as this from the prophecy of Gwenchlan : " Three times must we all die, before we come to our final repose?" or as the cry of the eagles, in the same poem, of fierce thirst for Christian blood, a cry in which the poet evidently gives vent to his own hatred? since the solidarity, to use that convenient French word, of Breton and Welsh poetry is so complete, that the ideas of the one may be almost certainly assumed not to have been wanting to those of the other. The question is, when Taliesin says, in the *Battle of the Trees*,—

" I have been in many shapes before I attained a congenial form. I have been a narrow blade of a sword, I have been a drop in the air, I have been a shining star, I have been a word in a book, I have been a book in the beginning, I have been a light in a lantern a year and a half, I have been a bridge for passing over three-score rivers; I have journeyed as an eagle, I have been a boat on the sea, I have been a director in battle, I have been a sword in the hand, I have been a shield in fight, I have been the string of a harp; I have been enchanted for a year in the foam of water. There is nothing in which I have not been. . . ." the question is, have these " statements of the universal presence of the wonder-working magician " nothing which distinguishes them from " similar creations of the human mind in times and places the most remote ; " have they not an inwardness, a severity of form, a solemnity of tone, which indicates the still reverberating echo of a profound doctrine and discipline, such as was Druidism? Suppose we compare Taliesin, as Mr. Nash invites us, with the gleeman of the Anglo-Saxon *Traveller's Song*. Take the specimen of this song which Mr. Nash himself quotes : " I have been with the Israelites and with the Essyringi, with the Hebrews and with the Indians and with the Egyptians; I have been with the Medes and with the Persians and with the Myrgings." It is very well to parallel with this extract Taliesin's " I carried the banner before Alexander; I was in Canaan when Absalom was slain; I was on the horse's crupper of Elias and Enoch; I was on the high cross of the merciful Son of God; I was the chief overseer at the building of the tower of Nimrod; I was with my King in the manger of the ass; I supported Moses through the waters of Jordan; I have been in the buttery in the land of the Trinity; it is not known what is the nature of its meat and its fish." It is very well to say that these assertions " we may fairly ascribe to the poetic fancy of a Christian priest of the thirteenth century." Certainly we may; the last of Taliesin's assertions more especially; though one must remark at the same time that the Welshman shows much more fire and imagination than the Anglo-Saxon. But Taliesin adds, after his " I was in Canaan when Absalom was slain," " *I was in the hall of Don before Gwydion was born*;" he adds, after " I was the chief overseer at the building of the tower of Nimrod," " *I have been three times resident in the*

castle of Arianrod ;" he adds, after "I was at the cross with Mary Magdalene," "*I obtained my inspiration from the cauldron of Ceridwen.*" And finally, after the mediæval touch of the visit to the buttery in the land of the Trinity, he goes off at score : "I have been instructed in the whole system of the universe ; I shall be till the day of judgment on the face of the earth. I have been in an uneasy chair above Caer Sidin, and the whirling round without motion between three elements. Is it not the wonder of the world that cannot be discovered ?" And so he ends the poem. But here is the Celtic, the essential part of the poem : it is here that the "formative pressure" has been really in operation ; and here surely is paganism and mythology enough, which the Christian priest of the thirteenth century can have had nothing to do with. It is unscientific, no doubt, to interpret this part as Edward Davies and Mr. Herbert do ; but it is unscientific also to get rid of it as Mr. Nash does. Wales and the Welsh genius are not to be known without this part ; and the true critic is he who can best disengage its real significance.

I say, then, what we want is to *know* the Celt and his genius ; not to exalt him or to abase him, but to know him. And for this a disinterested, positive, and constructive criticism is needed. Neither his friends nor his enemies have yet given us much of this. His friends have given us materials for criticism, and for these we ought to be grateful ; his enemies have given us negative criticism, and for this, too, up to a certain point, we may be grateful ; but the criticism we really want neither of them has yet given us. Philology, that science which in our time has had so many successes, has not been abandoned by her good fortune in touching the Celt ; philology has brought, almost for the first time in their lives, the Celt and sound criticism together. The Celtic grammar of Zeuss, whose death is so grievous a loss to science, offers a splendid specimen of that patient, disinterested way of treating objects of knowledge, which is the best and most attractive characteristic of Germany. Zeuss proceeds neither as a Celt-lover nor as a Celt-hater ; not the slightest trace of a wish to glorify Teutonism or to abase Celtism, appears in his book. The only desire apparent there, is the desire to know his object, the language of the Celtic peoples, as it really is. In this he stands as a model to Celtic students ; and it has been given to him, as a reward for his sound method, to establish certain points which are henceforth cardinal points, landmarks, in all the discussion of Celtic matters, and which no one had so established before. People talked at random of Celtic writings of this or that age ; Zeuss has definitely fixed the age of what we actually have of these writings. To take the Cymric group of languages : our earliest Cornish document is a vocabulary of the thirteenth century ; our earliest Breton document is a short description of an estate in a deed of the ninth century ; our earliest Welsh documents are Welsh glosses of the eighth century to Eutychus, the grammarian, and Ovid's *Art of Love*, and the verses found by Edward Lhuyd in the *Juvenius* manuscript at Cambridge. The mention of this *Juvenius* fragment, by the by, suggests

the difference there is between a sound and an unsound critical habit. Mr. Nash deals with this fragment ; but, in spite of all his great acuteness and learning, because he has a bias, because he does not bring to these matters the disinterested spirit they need, he is capable of getting rid, quite unwarrantably, of a particular word in the fragment which does not suit him ; his dealing with the verses is an advocate's dealing, not a critic's. Of this sort of thing Zeuss is incapable.

The test which Zeuss used for establishing the age of these documents is a scientific test, the test of orthography and of declensional and syntactical forms. These matters are far out of my province, but what is clear, sound, and simple, has a natural attraction for us all, and one feels a pleasure in repeating it. It is the grand sign of age, Zeuss says, in Welsh and Irish words, when what the grammarians call the "destitutio tenuium" has not yet taken place ; when the sharp consonants have not yet been changed into flat, *p* or *t* into *b* or *d* ; when, for instance, *map*, a son, has not yet become *mab* ; *coet*, a wood, *coed* ; *ocet*, a harrow, *oed*. This is a clear, scientific test to apply, and a test of which the accuracy can be verified ; I do not say that Zeuss was the first person who knew of this test or applied it, but I say that he is the first person who in dealing with Celtic matters has invariably proceeded by means of this and similar scientific tests ; the first person, therefore, the body of whose work has a scientific, stable character ; and so he stands as a model to all Celtic inquirers.

His influence has already been most happy ; and as I have enlarged on a certain failure in criticism of Eugene O'Curry's,—whose business, after all, was the description and classification of materials rather than criticism,—let me show, by another example from Eugene O'Curry, this good influence of Zeuss upon Celtic studies. Eugene O'Curry wants to establish that compositions of an older date than the twelfth century existed in Ireland in the twelfth century, and thus he proceeds. He takes one of the great extant Irish manuscripts, the *Leabhar na h'Uidhre* ; or, *Book of the Dun Cow*. The compiler of this book was, he says, a certain Maclmuiri, a member of the religious house of Cluainmacnois. This he establishes from a passage in the manuscript itself : "This is a trial of his pen here, by Maclmuiri, son of the son of Conn na m'Bocht." The date of Maclmuiri he establishes from a passage in the *Annals of the Four Masters*, under the year 1106 : "Maclmuiri, son of the son of Conn na m'Bocht, was killed in the middle of the great stone church of Cluainmacnois, by a party of robbers." Thus he gets the date of the *Book of the Dun Cow*. This book contains an elegy on the death of St. Columb. Now, even before 1106, the language of this elegy was so old as to require a gloss to make it intelligible, for it is accompanied by a gloss written between the lines. This gloss quotes, for the explanation of obsolete words, a number of more ancient compositions ; and these compositions, therefore, must, at the beginning of the twelfth century, have been still in existence. Nothing can be sounder ; every step is proved, and fairly proved, as one goes

along. O'Curry thus affords a good specimen of the sane mode of proceeding so much wanted in Celtic researches, and so little practised by Edward Davies and his brethren; and to found this sane method, Zeuss, by the example he sets in his own department of philology, has mainly contributed.

Science's reconciling power, too, on which I have already touched, philology, in her Celtic researches, again and again illustrates. Races and languages have been absurdly joined, and unity has been often rashly assumed at stages where one was far, very far, from having yet really reached unity. Science has and will long have to be a divider and a separatist, breaking arbitrary and fanciful connections, and dissipating dreams of a premature and impossible unity. Still, science—true science—recognizes in the bottom of her soul a law of ultimate fusion, of conciliation. To reach this, but to reach it legitimately, she tends. She draws, for instance, towards the same idea which fills her elder and divine sister, poetry—the idea of the substantial unity of man; though she draws towards it by roads of her own. But continually she is showing us affinity where we imagined there was isolation. What school-boy of us has not rummaged his Greek dictionary in vain for a satisfactory account of that old name for the Peloponnese, the *Apian Land*? and within the limits of Greek itself there is none. But the Scythian name for earth, “apia,” *watery, water-issued*, meaning first *isle* and then *land*—this name, which we find in “avia,” *Scandinavia*, and in “ey” for island, *Alderney*, not only explains the *Apian Land* of Sophocles for us, but points the way to a whole world of relationships of which we knew nothing. The Scythians themselves again,—obscure, far-separated Mongolian people as they used to appear to us,—when we find that they are essentially Teutonic and Indo-European, their very name the same word as the common Latin word “scutum,” the *shielded* people, what a surprise they give us! And then, before we have recovered from this surprise, we learn that the name of their father and god, Targitavus, carries us I know not how much further into familiar company. This divinity, *Shining with the targe*, the Greek Hercules, the Sun, contains in the second half of his name, *tavus*, “shining,” a wonderful cement to hold times and nations together. *Tavus*, “shining,” from “tava,”—in Sanscrit, as well as Scythian, “to burn” or “shine,”—is *Divus, dies, Zeus, εὐς, Déva*, and I know not how much more; and *Taviti*, the bright and burnt, fire, the place of fire, the hearth, the centre of the family, becomes the family itself, just as our word family, the Latin *familia*, is from *thymelé*, the sacred centre of fire. The hearth comes to mean home. Then from home it comes to mean the group of homes, the tribe; from the tribe the entire nation; and in this sense of nation or people, the word appears in Gothic, Norse, Celtic, and Persian, as well as in Scythian; the *Theuthisks*, *Deutschen*, *Tudesques*, are the men of one *theuth*, nation, or people; and of this our name *Germans* itself is, perhaps, only the Roman translation, meaning the men of one germ or stock. The Celtic divinity, *Teutates*, has his name from the Celtic *teuta*,

people; *taviti*, fire, appearing here in its secondary and derived sense of *people*, just as it does in its own Scythian language in Targitavus's second name, *Tavit-varus*, *Teutaros*, the protector of the people. Another Celtic divinity, the Hesus of Lucan, finds his brother in the Gaisos, the sword, symbolizing the god of battles of the Teutonic Scythians. And after philology has thus related to each other the Celt and the Teuton, she takes another branch of the Indo-European family, the Slaves, and shows us them as having the same name with the German Suevi, the *solar* people; the common ground here, too, being that grand point of union, the sun, fire. So, also, we find Mr. Meyer, whose Celtic studies I just now mentioned, harping again and again on the connection even in Europe, if you go back far enough, between Celt and German. So, after all we have heard, and truly heard, of the diversity between all things Semitic and all things Indo-European, there is now an Italian philologist at work upon the relationship between Sanscrit and Hebrew.

Both in small and great things, philology, dealing with Celtic matters, has exemplified this tending of science towards unity. Who has not been puzzled by the relations of the Scots with Ireland—that *vetus et major Scotia*, as Colgan calls it? Who does not feel what pleasure Zeuss brings us when he suggests that *Gael*, the name for the Irish Celt, and *Scot*, are at bottom the same word, both having their origin in a word meaning *wind*, and both signifying *the violent, stormy people*? Who does not feel his mind agreeably cleared about our friends the Fenians, when he learns that the root of their name, *fen*, “white,” appears in the hero Fingal; in Gwynedd, the Welsh name for North Wales; in the Roman Venedotia; in Vannes in Brittany; in Venice? The very name of Ireland, some say, comes from the famous Sanscrit word *Arya*, the laud of the Aryans, or noble men; although the weight of opinion seems to be in favour of connecting it rather with another Sanscrit word, *avara*, occidental, the western land or isle of the west. But, at any rate, who that has been brought up to think the Celts utter aliens from us and our culture, can come without a start of sympathy upon such words as *heol* (sol), or *buaist* (fuisti)? or upon such a sentence as this, “*Peris Duw dui funnaun*” (“God prepared two fountains”)? Or when Mr. Whitley Stokes, one of the ablest scholars formed in Zeuss’s school, a born philologist—he now occupies, alas! a post under the Government of India, instead of a chair of philology at home, and makes one think mournfully of Montesquieu’s saying, that had he been an Englishman he should never have produced his great work, but have caught the contagion of practical life, and devoted himself to what is called “rising in the world”—when Mr. Whitley Stokes, in his edition of *Cornac’s Glossary*, holds up the Irish word *triath*, the sea, and makes us remark that, though the names *Triton*, *Amphitrite*, and those of corresponding Indian and Zend divinities, point to the meaning *sea*, yet it is only Irish which actually supplies the vocable, how delightfully that brings Ireland into the Indo-European concert! What a whole-

some buffet it gives to Lord Lyndhurst's alienation doctrines. To go a little further : of the two great Celtic divisions of language, the Gaelic and the Cymric, the Gaelic, say the philologists, is more related to the younger, more synthetic group of languages, Sanscrit, Greek, Zend, Latin, and Teutonic ; the Cymric to the older, more analytic Turanian group. Of the more synthetic Aryan group, again, Zend and Teutonic are, in their turn, looser and more analytic than Sanscrit and Greek, more in sympathy with the Turanian group and with Celtic. What possibilities of affinity and influence are here hinted at ; what lines of inquiry, worth exploring, at any rate, suggest themselves to one's mind. By the forms of its language a nation expresses its very self. Our language is the loosest, the most analytic, of all European languages. And we, then, what are we ? what is England ? I will not answer, A vast obscure Cymric basis with a vast visible Teutonic superstructure ; but I will say that that answer sometimes suggests itself, at any rate,—sometimes knocks at our mind's door for admission ; and we begin to cast about and see whether it is to be let in.

But the forms of its language are not our only key to a people ; what it says in its language, its literature, is the great key, and we must get back to literature. The literature of the Celtic peoples has not yet had its Zeuss, and greatly it wants him. We need a Zeuss to apply to Celtic literature, to all its vexed questions of dates, authenticity, and significance, the criticism, the sane method, the disinterested endeavour to get at the real facts, which Zeuss has shown in dealing with Celtic language. Science is good in itself, and therefore Celtic literature—Mr. Nash and the Celt-haters having failed to prove it a bubble—Celtic literature is interesting, merely as an object of knowledge. But it reinforces and redoubles our interest in Celtic literature if we find that here, too, science exercises the reconciling, the uniting influence of which I have said so much ; if we find here, more than anywhere else, traces of kinship, and the most essential sort of kinship, spiritual kinship, between us and the Celt, of which we had never dreamed. I settle nothing, and can settle nothing ; I have not the special knowledge needed for that. I have no pretension to do more than to try and awaken interest ; to seize on hints, to point out indications, which, to any one with a feeling for literature, suggest themselves ; to stimulate other inquirers. I must surely be without the bias which has so often rendered Welsh and Irish students extravagant ; why, my very name expresses that peculiar Semitico-Saxon mixture which makes the typical Englishman ; I can have no ends to serve in finding in Celtic literature more than is there. What *is* there, is for me the only question. But this question must be for another time.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

Told in the Firelight.

OLD friend, at last, at last after years of restless, strong desire,
 You are sitting close beside me once more in the flickering light of my fire
 And the sheen of your true and kindly face is the same as ever still,
 Tho' deeply altered, I ween, is that face, since last time we met, friend Will
 Bright, with the brightness of youth, are the eyes, yet all around the mouth
 Tenderly grave, not stern, the lines tell of the vanished youth
 And the stately form is slightly bent that I knew so straight and firm,
 Like the grand majestic rock that laughs defiance to heat of storm
 And the waves of care have swept o'er your head, and left just here and there
 A light faint streak of their silvery foam on the seaweed brown of your hair
 On your face that sweetness is settled down that oft is wrung out by pain
 From natures less noble than yours, as the juice is crushed away from the cane
 Both of us, Will, have loved, each sought, in the sweet spring-tide of his life,
 For the waking joy of his fervid dream, in the love and truth of a wife
 Your dream, at least, was realized, in the depths of soul-full eyes,
 And a tender shadowy calm, that hung like the dusk of Italian skies
 Over the grace of her movements light, a voice as soft as the sigh
 Of a wind among Summer's full-leaved trees: she was very fair to die.
 But I think, such sweetness was on her brow, such pureness on her tongue,
 She was loved with the mystic immortal love that we know is death to the
 young

Will, old friend, you remember full well the still September morn,
 When the only sound was the rustling, like wind, of sickles against the corn,
 That we made for your dove, her last earth-nest, under the light loose turf,
 Where the bending grass should never be stirred by the wind that had roared
 on the surf

Soon after that we parted, Will; you went to the "morning land,"
 Where Nature spreads a daily feast of the beautiful and grand,
 While her spirit watched over you, and kept the chords of your life well-strung.
 Else how, while other hearts are so old, can yours be so fresh and young?
 It is strange that the hand of Time should mellow to Autumn calm, each trace
 Of the burning joy of a soul-Summer, lit by the Sun of a beautiful face.
 Yet we know that so it is, and my heart is free from the slightest whirl
 Of passion; and quietly now enough I can think and speak of a girl,
 Rich in all sculpture-loveliness, with a forehead smooth and square,
 That gleamed argent-white against the mass of her nebulous hair,

And a cheek as pale and as passion-free as ever the marble is,
 And a mouth whose carving seemed all too firm for a lover's faltering kiss.
 With the dimmed eye-sight of one who gropes in a kind of spirit-gloaming,
 I took a marble statue to be a living and loving woman,
 And her still calm presence, moon-like, wrought such a desperate tide in my
 breast

Of stormy fire, I deemed that Love was but a name for unrest.
 And it chafed my soul that the stately lips, whenever on me she smiled,
 Should curve to the pitying, passionless smile we cast on a wayward child.
 But at last I dared to speak my mind, I could hold in silence no more
 The torrent of burning words, and I spoke as I never had spoken before ;
 And she stood listening, pallid and calm, with that dreamy look in her eyes
 Of one who gazes back to the Past, and its mazes and mysteries ,
 And, when I paused, she drooped her eyes, and the few short words she said,
 Were murmured so low, I only caught the sound of the last one—" Dead "
 " Dead " I echoed, " nay, Death and Love are wondrously far apart ,
 For Death itself may not touch the bloom that Love creates on the heart "
 Then she laid her hand on my arm, and with the mute soft grace
 Of a pitying tenderness lying like shade on the beautiful carved face,
 She told me that what I coveted another long since had gained ,
 That my nectar of love was brimmed up high but hers had been deeply
 drained

Something of poverty—parting—and then the struggle for daily bread
 In a stranger land, and at last the news that had crushed her hope, he was dead.
 And she stood in the curtained window, with her face so pale and pure,
 Like some sainted lady of olden days, who was proud and strong to endure
 Would God that my love had died down then to something whiter and fainter,
 As the lambent fire of him who adores the picture-love of painter ;
 That I never had uttered the words of fire that I wildly uttered now,
 When I caught her hand in mine, and pressed my lips on its veined snow
 " Hate me," I madly cried, " if you will, so you let me kneel and adore
 The light that shall be my guiding star for ever and evermore " "
 Then in a voice on whose clear full tone not a trace of emotion was shed,
 " I never can love again, but if you will, so be it!" she said.
 And I caught her close to my panting heart, and murmured, " Oh, Love, for
 ever!"

And she neither shrank from nor clung to me, but only prayed me to leave her
 Just for a little while ; she would strive to do all the duty of woman ;
 She knew me well, she said ; trusted me, called me a brave and true man ;
 Knew that I loved her ; but all was so strange, so new , and the mystic crisis
 Of Life was upon her now, and dark the Future stood veiled as Isis.
 And I looked in vain, in vain, for the crimson beacon of Love on her cheek,
 As a watcher looks with yearning eyes for the Eastern morning-streak. .

So we parted, but on my heart, with a nightmare's weight of lead
It lay, and haunted me without cease, all night, that one word "*Dead.*"

The days passed on, and a kind of calm that came instead of peace
Brooded, cloud-like, over my heart, and bade its wild throbbings cease
Yet, sometimes, despite, a longing would rise for a taste of the fiery bliss
Of heart to heart, and soul to soul, breathed out in a long love-kiss ;
A quenchless desire for life and heat, a fathomless yearning, I ween,
For a creature of human weakness and strength, instead of a throned Queen ;
For the delicate hearth-fire to cherish and tend, instead of the clear pale star,
For the beam of the lesser light close by, instead of the greater afar

I asked her when should my hope be crowned, and she prayed me for a year,
And her voice, with a muffled, tuneless beat, fell dull upon my ear.
And I knew that she asked me for that year, that the waters of Time might
sweep

Lethè-like over her soul, and drown all pain in a wakeless sleep.
So we settled to part for that one year, and I left my native shore,
Not to see her again, until I never should part from her more,
But a shadow fell with the last cold touch of her hand on mine, alas !
And a whisper rang without cease in my ear, "*Omnia Finitas*"

Under the sapphire sky of the land, whose gems and marvels of Art
Gleam in a countless multitude, I wandered with restless heart
For the rich clear light on the myrtle bloom only made my spirit full
Of the yearning, like pain, for the Sun of Love, on the Flower of the Beautiful.

The year was over and gone, at last, and both of us bound for home,
I and another—an artist-friend I had made while I stayed at Rome.
A kindly, open-hearted man, who was coming home to claim
The right to circle a finger with gold, and blend a name with his name :
He told his story frankly to me, that, five long years ago,
He and his love had met and parted in bitter tears and woe,
Knowing not when they might meet again, but strong in the love and truth
That keep the flowers of the soul so fresh in the dew and beauty of youth.
They trusted each other fully, and he knew he should find her the same
In heart and soul, as the last sweet time he had heard her utter his name.

He had struggled hard on his way in life, he had hugged with a miser's grasp
 The gold that brought him, every day, nearer the deathless clasp
 Of her virgin hand, and the tender glow of her lustrous full-grey eye.
 For evermore and for evermore, it was wonderful, quenchless joy.
 And he paced the long deck to and fro, looking so blest and proud
 In his love and trust, that I know not how I uttered my thought aloud
 With a touch of cynicism, that now I think of, old friend, with pain,
 I said, "How could you bear to lose where you only think to gain?"
 And he stopped his walk, and gazed at me, with a look of perfect calm,
 Like the peace of a soul that is fully tuned to the pitch of the infinite psalm
 Of Love "I have thought of that before. she may be dead and gone,
 May be lying with violets on her breast—God's holy will be done—
 Or else she may have thought me dead, and have given herself to one
 More worthy than I could be of her; 'twere hard to stuff a moan
 For that intensity of pain. In the heart's deep book I have read
 That Grief is more for the living lost, than ever it is for the dead
 But I dread it not, I feel so strong in the infinite love and trust,
 And I know that God will never let my full hope crumble to dust.
 She cannot else be lost; I know there's a cant that society uses
 When a frivolous girl plays with a heart as long as her fancy chooses,
 Then casts the poor plaything away for others to toy with, unless, indeed,
 It be too much broken for that, and cares not and takes not the slightest heed—
 And they call it 'only flirting;' but she is so pure and holy and high,
 As much above that unwomanly shame as a star in its depth of sky.
 And all of the lofty and beautiful, with her inmost nature, is blent:
 My treasure perhaps may be lost to me, but it cannot have thus been spent."

I had seen her once more, my statue-love; she had met me with no other
 Passion or fire, than a girl might give to the love of a father or brother,
 But her face was more sweet and soft than of yore, and I thought, "She has
 learned to forget
 All of her grief for her lost true-love, and she will love me yet."
 We were sitting together one eve alone, her hand lay light in mine—
 The quiet hand that I never yet had starred with a lover sign.
 She was reading aloud a strange old song, that had pleased her fancy much,
 When we heard a footstep, an opened door, and she drew her hand from my
 touch;
 Then she lifted her full-lashed eyes, and with a cry, that rang
 As a joy-bell rings on a doom'd man's ear, with a deer-like bound she sprang,
 And an eagerness that quivered and beat through every nerve in her frame,
 To her home on his breast for evermore, and he kissed her, and named her
 name.

Just a moment together they stood, forgetting all but the joy
Of a love whose infinite sweetness and strength nor time nor space could destroy.
Then she started back from his arms, with the rich, full scarlet glow,
Flashing, banner-like, over her face, from her chin to her broad, full brow,
And a tremulous sweetness, clear as the light of the cloudless sun of the South,
Shone in the depths of the glorious eyes, and parted the chiselled mouth ;
And all the marble loveliness was lit with the light of a human
And passionate love, until it was wrought to the fairest beauty of woman.
My heart sent forth a desperate cry, as wordless I passed from the door,
Like the last long wail of a mariner drowned in sight of the ship and the shore.

There is the end, old friend Draw closer, I think there's something grand
In the firm and full and steadfast grasp of a strong-knit muscular hand
The hand of a man like you, Will, it never will give the slip,
And it comes so sweet to the heart that has lost the joy of a true-love's lip.
But I call it casting reproach, old friend, on God and His infinite plan,
Who gave the love of man to woman and the love of woman to man,
When those who have lost that bliss, or those to whom that bliss is denied,
Sneer at the holy name of Love, and smother, with selfish pride,
The seed of pain, that, if watered well, might bear such blessed fruit
Of pure and tender thought, and make the cry of Selfishness mute
And Life has autumn and winter joys left yet, and I love to see
Her little children (that I had hoped should be mine) around my knee—
And the gladness of other love I have, for we read of one tender and true man,
(Like you) who gave to his friend a love "passing the love of woman"

A Letter from a Convict in Australia to a Brother in England.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,—

YOU are probably meditating, or are actually engaged in a breach of the law. I do not know your circumstances, nor the influences to which you are exposed. But I know that you are in danger, and I therefore take up my pen to set before you the future which is almost certainly in store for you, if you persist in your present course. Law-breaking is not your profession, it is not with you a line of trading to which you have bound yourself with all its dangers, as worth the risk; but you have got into a current which may carry you on shoals and quicksands which you know not how to avoid; and though you are conscious of its dangers, and are from time to time thrown into the most dreadful alarm, you still, unwillingly yet desperately, hold on. You could escape—partially escape at least—but it would need an amount of energy and decision which you, perhaps, do not possess: still, you can scarcely be ranked among the incurables, and what I say may not be without its effect: in any case it may be of use to lessen your suffering, if not to ward it off.

Let me begin your story. I will commence with your arrest. This will most probably happen just when you are doubting whether you should not fly. You will have been warned—warned, perhaps, by something very trifling—nothing more than something odd in the manner of your employer, or in the looks or movements of those about you; but warned you will have been. This seems to be a universal law. And you will have felt the warning, and been uneasy, but you will not have had decision enough, or have made sufficient preparation, to fly instantly, and you are taken. I know your nature, and the whole history of your difficulty. You are not a deliberate plunderer, who has made up his mind to enrich himself by one grand coup and retire—if you were, you would be in little danger; you have allowed yourself in embezzlements or forgeries to meet some pressing emergency, hoping to replace what you have taken before you are found out. You are a poor pottering, bungling amateur, and are unprepared what to do at the moment of decisive action, and will be taken. And now you learn for the first time how society deals with those who offend against her. You are

* [It may be unnecessary to state that this Letter is really the production of a convict, now in Australia. We, of course, hold ourselves responsible neither for its statements nor its sentiments.]—ED.

arrested, carried away between two silent men—solemn as undertakers—to a police-station. If in London, where we will suppose your arrest to take place, you are “removed” in the old familiar cab. It is a dismal ride. As you ride through the streets, you cannot help feeling that the world is passing away from you.

Arrived at the police-station (we will suppose the station to be Bow Street and the time night), you are searched and deprived of your knife or anything you may have about you with which you can do yourself or others bodily injury, and led into one of a set of rooms with a fixed bench on three sides of it, and a door on the fourth. These rooms or cells, almost dark by day, are quite so by night. Whether you will be alone depends on the number and kind of those waiting for examination. But, as you are a “respectable” man, the policeman in charge of you, belonging, as he will probably do, to the upper grades of the service, will no doubt have the good taste to “treat you as a gentleman,” and you will not be thrust in among the roughs. I myself, on each of the days I was at Bow Street, had one, and only one, companion. The first time it was a fast man who was taken up because he was drunk and incapable, and who insisted on taking off everything but his shirt, and lying down on the hard boards. The second was a gentleman who had been so unlucky as to upset “a case of things that looked like glass, and which he afterwards understood to be diamonds;” and the third was a postman—a handsome young fellow, who tried in vain to cheer himself by the hope of a moderate sentence and a life in the backwoods of America when it was finished. But whoever may be your immediate companions, these are terrible hours. Without, drunken women dragged along the passage to the cells like sacks of potatoes—mothers, entreating that a message may be sent to their home in some intricate alley where their little children are waiting for them; girls from the streets using their now restricted powers of blandishment to get “Sir Robert” to do this or that for them, or telling Tom or Bill in the next cell “to cheer up, for she will pay his fine for him;” and within, an indescribable mixture of feelings arising at once from dread of the scene in which you are about to appear, the thought of the misery of those that love you, and your almost complete isolation from your friends at the moment when so much has to be said and done. The first few hours of your incarceration are, of course, the worst during this phase of your story. You fear almost—so long as he is in coming—that you may not have the assistance of your solicitor; but he comes at last, and so does the hearing before the court. It is a quiet little court—it is so at least at Bow Street—and on coming into it you feel momentarily relieved. And now Mr. Smallfry, of the firm of Smallfry and Hunter, or the representative of some other firm of prosecuting celebrity, draws a detailed and most unwarrantable account of your delinquency. You stand aghast at the picture of your guilt as they paint it. However, no one else present seems to be dismayed. You reserve your defence, and you find yourself remanded or committed.

Your first examination before the magistrate over, you are now taken to prison. If in London, you will be taken most probably in the first instance, and while you are under remand, to Clerkenwell, and afterwards, when fully committed, to Newgate, though it is possible you may be at Newgate all along.

And now begin to dawn on you the humiliations and restrictions of prison life. Taken away from the police-station, no longer in the old familiar cab, but in a small dark compartment of a long hearse-like vehicle, much resembling the Post-Office vans, you are received at the prison, not indeed as a convicted man, but quite as a guilty one. Looking back to my first introduction to Clerkenwell, I have some difficulty, regarding such things as I now do, in recognizing it as accompanied by any hardship or even humiliation worth caring about, nor can I at all realize the terrible suffering which it occasioned me. I remember I found myself ranked up in line with a strange medley of men, chiefly from the lowest ranks, and that I was bid to "right face," and had to march with them as one of themselves, and had my clothes and carpet-bag searched, and was finally locked up in a cell which was certainly a very different place to the comfortable rooms to which I had been all my life accustomed. But what was there in all this? Nothing, as far as I can now see, to cause me anything more than a feeling of annoyance at having got into a mess. The warder of my cell was, I well remember, ready to make me as comfortable as he could, took my orders for dinner, and even found me books for amusement. Then, if my cell was not equal to my own library, it was at least clean and quiet, and had a good jet of gas in it, and a roomy hammock, and I could sleep, or read or write. Truly, I have never been in such good, or at least in as easy, quarters since, though I have been now some time at my liberty.

But the world has soon to lose its power, and the prison cell its terrors. You will indeed never suffer in this way but twice afterwards, *viz.* once when you first find yourself in Newgate, and again, when you are convicted. You may suffer a good deal on changing your prisons, and also on seeing your friends for the first time after conviction, but only on the two occasions I have mentioned will you suffer as on the first night in prison.

You should make arrangements for your defence while under remand, and, if arrested in London, do so while you are at Clerkenwell. This I advise because you will never again have such facilities for making them. The restrictions imposed on you even at Clerkenwell are not such as should be imposed on one who is in the eye of the law regarded as innocent, and whose whole future welfare may depend on the arrangements he may make for his defence. He ought to be able to see his friends at any reasonable hour, and to have his correspondence secure from official or other supervision. This, I regret to say, is not the case. He can indeed see his solicitor at any time, but other friends he can only see from half-past eleven to one o'clock in the day, and his correspond-

ence is all read by one of the principal officers of the prison : meanwhile, the prosecutor is left unimpeded to rake up or suppress evidence, and place himself in the best possible position. Still, Clerkenwell presents facilities for arranging your affairs which you will not possess after leaving it. Your friends can talk with you through a perforated plate in your door, and your conversation is private. You can moreover see them every day for half an hour. Besides this, you can obtain from the prison authorities a list of the attorneys practising in the criminal court, and any information about them you may require. And of this, let me tell you, you will do well to avail yourself if you have not (as you ought to have done) determined on your man long before your arrest.

Having engaged the legal adviser most to your liking, press on the immediate preparation of your case. At Clerkenwell, and while you are still under remand and can see your friends, you can force forward your solicitor with much less difficulty than when you come to be under stricter regulations, as at Newgate ; and your trial, moreover, should, under ordinary circumstances, be brought on as quickly as possible. The prosecution has less opportunity to rake up evidence, and, for yourself, the sooner the thing is settled the better. At Clerkenwell too, supposing that you are sure to be committed for trial, transfer your property. In short, complete your arrangements while you are still under remand.

The prosecution, having brought up all the evidence they believe themselves able to find, no more remands are applied for, and you are finally committed, and are said to be no longer merely under detention, but in prison ; and the dismal, hearse-like vehicle in which you are taken to and from the police-court, deposits you at that place of terrible associations—Newgate. This will be one of the very painful epochs in your imprisonment. The entrance to the prison, which forms part of the old building and is in the dungeon style of bygone days, with massive bars and huge iron rings and thick nailed doors, causes a very unpleasant sensation when you are first introduced to it. The interior of the prison is new and in the light and airy style, but the complete silence—the very word “silence” written in large characters in the centre of the spiral staircase—the long lines of closed doors, tier above tier—fall perhaps more heavily on the heart than even the dungeon entrance. It seems as if your prison were gradually closing around you. I have seen no prison which pressed on me so painfully at first sight as Newgate. Here, after bathing, you find yourself taken, not to any of the compartments opening out on the light iron galleries above you, but to a cell under ground. And now you realize that you are in Newgate. How terrible that underground cell was to me in the multitudinous miserable thoughts it brought into my mind I cannot tell you. But it is only for a night ; the next day you ascend, and are put into a light cell, just such as you have seen in model prisons—a cell about 10 feet by 6 feet, with a black floor, white walls, a small table, a corner washstand, a window of corrugated glass, a ham-

mock and bedclothes, plate, spoon, &c. This is comfortable enough, except that in consequence of the window having a very small opening, one's feelings for some time after being shut up is that of being suffocated. I well remember that the greatest luxury that could have been afforded me would have been to have had my door open. I seemed to want room to breathe. The same feeling follows one in every part of this prison. I used quite to long for chapel time, because I generally sat near an open window.

Another objectionable feature in the discipline of Newgate is the obliging a prisoner—who is yet, observe, regarded as an innocent man—to polish his floor, keep up the lustre of his brass basin, scrub the table, and fold up his hammock and bedclothes, and arrange the smallest articles of his cell furniture in one precise way. It is no great hardship indeed, when you get used to it, but if you have never done such work, and have, besides, a sore heart—and if, above all, you are busy preparing for your trial—it will seem very hard, especially as nothing short of the most absolute precision will suffice. Another most objectionable thing at this prison, and one which on many accounts should be altered, is the place in which prisoners are alone allowed to see their friends. Except in some special cases, visitors are placed 'en masse' literally in an iron cage, with a double row of bars, so that, being at a distance of some two feet from the prisoner, and all talking together, it is positively most difficult for them to make themselves heard. It is a perfect Babel—an arrangement altogether most painful and unseemly. There is, moreover, no excuse for it, as it would be just as easy for visitors to see a prisoner through the wire-covered aperture in his cell door here, as it was for them to do so in Clerkenwell; nor are there any objections in the one case which would not hold good in the other.

It seems rather hard, moreover, in the case of a man whom the law still regards as innocent, to restrict the visits of friends to three days in the week, as is the present practice. But, with the exception of the above painful and rather unwarrantable arrangements, Newgate is an admirably ordered prison—a model prison of its kind. The food—supposing the necessities of those at home require you to throw yourself on prison diet—is clean, good, and well cooked, and, except for hungry countrymen, sufficient in quantity. It consists of stirabout morning and night—the only skilfully made stirabout you will meet with in your prison course—and soup and meat on alternate days, the soup, again, being the best concocted of prison soups. I should say that at Newgate the art of cooking skilfully and economically is understood as it is scarcely understood in any prison we have. The other hygienic arrangements, for mind and body, are equally creditable. In the way of exercise, medical attendance, religious advice, every effort is made to meet the wants of the prisoner in his new and painful condition, and made with judgment. Strict in carrying out all the rules of one of the strictest prisons in England, the warders yet behave thoroughly well to the real sufferers with whom they come in

contact. You will meet with no body of warders who can be compared to them, except at Pentonville. It is now some years since I left Newgate, and I have passed through several prisons in which I enjoyed more light and air, and general comfort, but I still remember the officers of Newgate with respect and gratitude.

So much for Newgate. The next thing is the trial. You will not find this so terrible an affair as you perhaps anticipate. The position in which you will be placed, and which it now seems to you must be so exquisitely painful, will at the time be almost lost sight of in the importance of the issue. But, on the other hand, you will find much to cause you very great anxiety, over and above the merits of the case. If the court, for instance, is pressed for time, either on account of the number of prisoners to be tried, or because the judges have to be off almost immediately to the Assizes, you will have the satisfaction of learning that, unless you choose to have your case put off to the next sessions, it may not be possible to obtain a fair trial; or should you be lucky enough to stand for trial when the court has no such pressure on it, you may learn that the judge who will try you is extremely "testy," or "prejudiced," or is a "special pleader," or is fond of "cutting down" cases, or is "fearfully severe," &c. But it cannot be helped, and the best thing is to press on.

Except it be to avoid a notoriously severe judge, do not allow your trial to be put off a single session after your case is or can be prepared. What will be the leading features of your trial, when it is called on for hearing, I cannot tell. All I can foretell is that the perjuries of witnesses, the exaggerations of counsel, the exclusion of evidence which ought to be admitted, the admission of evidence which ought to be excluded, the misconstruction of acts the most innocent, the omission of things you dreaded, the singular conclusions of individual jurymen, will be such as to make you feel how helpless you are, and cause you to resign yourself to your fate—thankful that you have an able counsel, cool, collected, and experienced, to fight your battle. The trial itself will not torture you much; it will bring little to light that is not known—for you have been already torn to pieces in your examination before the magistrate. But you *will* suffer in the terrible half-hour of suspense while the jury are consulting—and when they pronounce you "Guilty." The fatal blow has fallen, and what else is said or done you feel to be immaterial. But your state of unconsciousness lasts not long; you revive, and that quickly; and terrible indeed are the first hours afterwards.

In the journey from Newgate to Millbank you will probably for the first time find yourself in uninterrupted intercourse with those who are suffering with you. As the mode of conveyance will most likely be an omnibus, you will probably form part of a line of prisoners connected by a chain—a type of the close companionship you are presently to hold with them. You shudder at them now; but when you actually meet them during the time the handcuffs are being fitted on previous to your

removal, and when, linked hand in hand with them, you ride that strange ride through London, you will merely feel towards them as men more or less good-natured, who are in the same condition as yourself. In other respects that ride to Millbank is not unpleasant. Momentary as it is, the passing out of the gloomy prison into the great stream of human life and the broad light of day, and the being able to talk freely with other creatures of one's kind, has more of pleasure than of pain. The chain and the handcuffs grate harshly on you at first, but by this time you will have got pretty philosophical.

Arrived at Millbank, you will be for a few hours placed with some four or five others in a cell to wait the examination of the warders and surgeon. The examination by the latter is well enough, but that by the warders, which takes place when you are stripped for bathing, is of the most disgusting description. It need not be so, nor is it perhaps intended by the authorities to be what it is ; but the subordinate officers of Millbank seem, unlike those of Newgate, to have been chosen for their roughness and bearishness. They are unquestionably among the lowest, if they are not the very lowest, of those of any prison through which I have passed. But Millbank is altogether a rough style of prison, both in the way of carrying out prison discipline and in that of prison arrangements. All is loud, indecent, rough.* In other respects you will find the change to Millbank grateful to you. The cells—ininitely the best of any I have seen (or even heard of, with the exception of those at Woking, an invalid station) are welcome beyond conception for their windows alone. These are a good size, with clear glass, and open wide, so that you can see the real light of day, and freely breathe and feel the fresh air. How delightful to me was the first sensation afforded by these wide-opening, clear glass windows, I cannot describe. As the light streamed down on me, and the air blew fresh into the cell, I revelled in them.

At Millbank the silent system is enforced, but not very perfectly, and you will get quite as much conversation as you are likely to desire. Then the day is broken by chapel and exercise, and the week by a day at school, and perhaps by a visit from a scripture-reader or one of the chaplains. Your food is, in the morning, cocoa, with beef (very hard) for dinner, and very badly made gruel for supper. The materials are good, but the cooking bad. The bread is excellent, the best you will get in prison. The hammocks, which are original in structure, with a division in the centre, do not appear to be intended to sleep in so much as to exercise your powers as an acrobat, but with care you may get into them and sleep in one of their two divisions. The chapel is large, the chaplains popular, and the singing tolerably good. Your exercise consists of a walk in one of the yards,—officers in centre, men walking round at intervals of five or six yards,—and a turn at a many-handled pump by which water is raised to the cells. Beyond this I have nothing to remark

* It must be remembered that all this relates to an experience of several years ago.

of Millbank, except that the subordinate officers, an unusual number of whom appear to be tailors, are especially fond of affecting a military demeanour, and making an ostentatious display of their staves. How long you will stay at Millbank is quite uncertain. You may stay there three weeks, or you may remain nine months, but probably after a few weeks you will be removed to Pentonville.

The journey from Millbank to Pentonville, like that from Newgate to Millbank, will most likely be performed in an omnibus. You will rather enjoy the ride. It is pleasanter than the first prison ride; you are getting used to the situation. You will, moreover, have heard a good report of the place to which you are going. The first sight of Pentonville is, notwithstanding, far from encouraging. You see that you have lost your light and air-giving window. But the report is correct on the whole. Except as regards the window, your condition is in every respect improved. The cells, though not so large as those of Millbank, are carefully arranged for decency and cleanliness, and the pervading spirit of the prison is that of quietness, regularity, and good sense. It is a strict prison, but all is done kindly, sensibly, and well; and (which is no little matter to a prisoner) you have easily accessible counsel and assistance, and such as you feel you can rely on as coming from persons experienced and well-judging, and ready to consider your difficulties carefully. At Pentonville you have the same high grade of officers and warders as at Newgate, with a longer period in which to make their kindness felt. As regards the dietary arrangements, these are conducted with a care only equalled, as I have heard, in one Government prison—that of Portland. The contractors are obliged to faithfully fulfil their contracts, and all is well cooked. I remember on one occasion, when some of the mutton was rather yellow, and suspected of not being what it should be, a prisoner who was by trade a butcher was brought down to examine it. He pronounced it of excellent quality throughout. This incident shows the care used. The prison itself is built with a view to easy management, and to accustom the prisoners to the value of cleanliness and propriety. Pentonville is regarded as the representative of the model prison on the separate system, and it represents the system as faithfully and favourably as could be desired.

After having been from nine to twelve months in separate confinement, you leave Pentonville for the "public works," as they are called, and are attached to Chatham, Portsmouth, Portland, or Dartmoor prison; or, if a confirmed invalid, you are sent to Woking. Of their relative merits I confess myself unable to speak positively, for I have no means of judging, except by comparing statements almost all more or less at variance with each other. But, as far as I can judge, all the first four stations are pretty much on a par—all about equally disagreeable, and possessing, if not the same, equivalent advantages and disadvantages. I shall therefore speak only of Portsmouth, the station to which I was myself sent. The journey from Pentonville is performed by omnibus to the South Western ter-

minus, and thence by rail. Like the other journeys of the kind in which you have taken part, it is on the whole pleasant. There is one disagreeable feature in it, no doubt. You find yourself standing chained on the railway platform in the midst of those unchained ones with whom you have no part; but you will have ceased to care much about such little collisions by this time, and if the weather is fine, or indeed if it is not, you will be fully sensible of the pleasure of breathing the fresh country air, and looking over green fields. You are kept in a carriage devoted exclusively to the conveyance of your party, but you are otherwise little constrained in this transfer of yourself. You left the separate system behind you in passing out of Pentonville, and the officers who accompany you treat you as men passed into a comparative state of freedom.

Arrived at the "public works" prison at Portsmouth, you see that you have come under a system, not only different from that to which you have been hitherto subjected, but directly opposed to it. Everything you have seen in "separates" you now find completely reversed. No two systems could be more strikingly antagonistic. In "separates," you have cells sufficiently roomy, and have light and air, and are encouraged and assisted to form habits of cleanliness and decency; at the same time you are carefully kept from the evil influence of other prisoners, and are brought into frequent contact with persons whose influence must be good,—as that of the chaplain and scripture-readers. At the "public works," the opposite system is tried. The cells consist of tiers of iron boxes (I can give them no other name), 7 feet by 4 feet, and rather more than 6 feet high, or as nearly as possible the size of one compartment of a railway carriage. As for windows, many of the cells have none, except in the door, and the best have only a darkened pane of glass about 12 inches by 4 inches, and their corrugated iron sides are painted a dark dismal drab or iron colour.

Anything more dreadful than these places when you are first enclosed in them cannot be conceived. Many a man when first shut up in them feels as if he must go out of his mind. Cheerful-looking places to the visitor who sees them through their open doors when the light streams into them from the hall, they are simply horrible to the man who is shut up in them. These constitute the first evil of "public works." The next is, that even in these, bad as they are, you are not allowed a moment's rest or security. In "separates" it was thought well to allow time for reading, thought, prayer. Here not a moment is allowed for anything but noise and work. Matters are so arranged that from the ringing of the first bell in the morning till you go out to work, all is hurry, noise, dirt, bustle. In a cell in which you can barely turn, and in which you have everything to do in almost perfect darkness, and which is so ill provided with vessels and other means of cleanliness that to get through your cell-cleaning at all is like working a Chinese puzzle, and requires the most adroit management, you have to work rapidly and ceaselessly (swallowing your cup of cocoa in sweat and dirt) till you go to

chapel. Then comes a few minutes' rest; then—I shudder while I write it—the grand scramble for the closets. It is impossible to describe this scene—it is too shocking. Chapel and the grand scramble over, you go to work in the dockyard, and you will find it really hard work. You do little or no good. All the prisoners together—let them be six hundred—do no more than fifty regular workmen, who knew their business and had proper appliances, would do with ease. Then, again, a great part of the work done does not want doing. Blocks of iron and pieces of timber are moved backwards and forwards for the mere purpose of giving something to do. Those who have to point out the day's work have often quite a difficulty in devising a job. But this is all one to you. Your only care will be, after you have been on the works a few weeks, to get into one of the easier parties and with one of the better class of officers. The subordinate officers at Portsmouth are, or were, at least, in my time, a very inferior class of men as a body, but there were good men among them. The prisoners injure each other greatly, for all intercourse between them is a communication of vicious reminiscences and designs, but with you they will not interfere. They will even respect you, if you deserve it; and some will gain your respect in return. After dragging about wood or iron, cleaning the sides of vessels, cleaning out docks, coaling, or expending your unskilled labour, and running hairbreadth escapes of losing a finger, or leg, or arm—for few escape maiming sooner or later—you return to dinner. This consists of plain boiled beef or mutton, with some kind of vegetable, and, though mixed up together in very dirty tins, is sufficient for health. You have now an hour's rest—your one quiet hour in the day. This ended, comes a few minutes' freedom in the yard, where the scramble of the morning is re-acted in a less violent form; then parade, and the searching of the person, and the filing off to work.

The afternoon's work ended, you are again marched to the prison, and after another searching of the person are discharged to your cell, to change your smock and boots for a jacket and shoes before going to chapel. Then comes another grand parade before the cell doors, then filing off to chapel, then a weary service, in which a weary chaplain prays and preaches before weary men, with inward growlings and unquiet slumbers for the result. Men who have been hard at work during the day are in no condition, mental or physical, for joining in a holy service.

After chapel you go to your cell and your supper of gruel, but not to rest. The half hour allotted for supper ended, there arises such a Babel of sounds—of warders shouting and swearing, and feet rushing, and brushes scrubbing—that you begin to think yourself in a North-country weaving factory. You may not take part in the work every night, but you will find your turn come pretty often, and may have to work on in sweat and noise till ten minutes to bed-time. Then at length you are hurried to bed, with scarce time to put up your hammock (which must not be touched before), and are left through the noises of

the night to seek a fitful sleep. It requires long use to sleep soundly. All through the great tier of iron boxes which serve as cells, you hear everything that is done by your neighbours; and what with the noise of the warders, and rows in one or other part of the resonant building, your sleep will be broken for many weeks; while you grow gradually sensible, as the morning draws on, that you are in the midst of a great cesspool. I speak strongly, but with truth.

Such is the system of "public works" in England: in the day it is endless parade, and keeping step, and misapplied labour; and at night broken rest in a most foul atmosphere. A more irritating discipline I have never seen put in practice, and it was astonishing to see how thoroughly reckless it made the prisoners subjected to it: I never saw any discipline affect men more unfavourably. The officers might not see it; the authorities might know little or nothing of it, except as it gave rise occasionally to partial outbreaks; but I, who lived in the under-current, saw it clearly. To make things worse, just as I left, the men were deprived of their Sunday. The relaxation of parade on this one day had hitherto been a saving point in this most wretched system. Hitherto the prisoners, though surrounded by officers and kept in a small circle like people at a fair, could select their companions and even sit down on the ground by the prison side and rest. But a few Sundays before I left the prison even this one comfort was taken away, and the "day of rest" was divided between parading for chapel, sitting in chapel, and being marched round and round the yard. You must look forward to a trying time at public works. And yet, so pleasant is it to be out of doors and drink the fresh air, that you would not willingly go back to the "separate-system" prison.

I have spoken of the "public-works" system as it will appear to you or any who have occupied a respectable position. But, mistake me not, by the mass of prisoners many of the evils of the system are hardly perceived, even though insensibly irritated by them. The one great thing with these is to have free intercourse with each other, and so long as they have this, and can get enough to eat and obtain an occasional chew of tobacco, other annoyances, even while they irritate, do not trouble them greatly. Again, you yourself will suffer less after a while. Things will become more and more tolerable every day. The Chinese puzzle of the cell will be solved, and you will actually be able to get a little time to yourself; and to the noise and scolding, and darkened light, and nightly odour, you will become almost indifferent. You will deteriorate. I myself was satisfied that if I stayed at Portsmouth, I should lose all power of abstraction, together with all mental habits of any use to me, and that I should become as completely brutalized as it was possible for an educated, temperate man to be. One thing I ought to add. There is every disposition on the part of the governor and principal assistants in the prison to act fairly and kindly, nor are they responsible for the evils of the place. They are there to carry out a system clearly defined, without power to

modify it. The evils I have pointed out belong in part to the form of building adopted for the prison, in part to the system itself.

And now one more stage—Western Australia—and I have done. The time you will have to serve in England has, I understand, been greatly and very injudiciously extended, but if (as I suppose to be the case) you are a long-sentence man, and Australia is a penal settlement in your time, to Australia you will eventually come. Be thankful that it is so. The passage may look alarming, the idea of being cooped up between decks for three months with the worst of the class you see before you, may be abhorrent to you; but the very voyage itself which seems so dreadful will be better than public works. To be cooped up with the characters you see before you—even though you are so only at night—is indeed bad; worse, far worse in some ways than you can have any idea of. In those hours during which you are shut down below—hours in which no officer dare show his face—the atmosphere is for foul conversation a little hell. You then see human nature, not in its highest form of development, wholly unrestrained in word or thought. What the heart suggests is spoken out without shame or hesitation. There is no savageness or brutality—nothing of the kind; but filthiness beyond belief. The god of the professional thief is not Satan, but Beelzebub; not the god of hate and pride, but of lewdness and dirt.

In the ship in which I came out, the scene on Christmas night, a night of supreme uproariousness, gave me a more fearful idea of hell than any I could have ever conceived, and yet all was good-humour and jollity. It was a display of unrestrained thought exhibited in unrestrained language. It was horrible. I remember a first-class thief of the French school saying to me that could he have ever realized being present at such a scene it would have cured him of thieving. A hardened professional, and by no means nice, even he felt it to be “horrible.” But your life on board the convict ship is, with this one drawback, a step forward. While on board you are practically free. You are shut down at night, but in the day you are your own master in the forepart of the ship, and even at night are undisturbed by officers. A convict ship, from the moment she is out of sight of land, is practically in the hands of the three hundred men she is transporting. There is a guard of pensioners, it is true, and precautions are taken to meet any outbreak, but the power is with the three hundred young able desperates, and there are so many occasions when the guard might be taken unprepared that the safety of the vessel really depends on the temper of the men. It is therefore an object of primary importance to avoid anything calculated to give unnecessary irritation. The great thing is to keep the men contented and careless, and this is best effected by leaving them to themselves. So left, allowed to lounge about and read and talk and smoke (above deck) as they please, and obliged only to keep their part of the ship clean, and do what is necessary for health and cleanliness—they give no trouble. Easily, very easily irritated, they yet desire a safe, quiet voyage.

Most of them men who have seen a great deal of life and well able to calculate consequences, they see no good to be gained even by a successful seizure of the vessel, and if left to do pretty much as they please, will be as orderly as ordinary passengers. The surgeon who has charge of them either knows this from his own experience, or is carefully warned of it, and leaves the men to themselves accordingly. How far the knowledge that they are to receive no conditional pardons may operate on long-sentence men in future voyages it is impossible to say. But I apprehend it will make little difference, as most would think it best to wait till they get to Australia, and escape thence in some quiet way. But, in any case, it must always be the policy of those in charge to allow all reasonable liberty on board ship. This you will find very grateful. The order of things will vary in many details every successive trip, but the leading features will be much the same in all. You will be new-clothed for the voyage, will have a double suit of under-clothing, will have an idle day or two of preparation, will undergo sundry surgical examinations, and a sermon at chapel specially adapted to the occasion, and will be addressed by a director on the improvement you may expect in your condition, by your transportation to a colony where there is plenty of employment and high wages, and on the special advantages which will accrue to you as prisoners if you are well conducted during the voyage. At any rate such an address used to be made, and then it was to a certain extent true; for though only a very few prisoners, those, namely, who held billets in the ship or who acted as informers, received any remission of their sentence in consequence of their good conduct on board, they did receive something considerable, six, twelve, and even eighteen months being struck from a probation; but now this is all done away with. Let the surgeon who takes the men out do his best to obtain remission for deserving men, he can only obtain three weeks or a month.

The address over, you march to the waterside, whence you are conveyed by boat or steamer to the transport, your late companions on shore cheering heartily, and your own fellows cheering back. Told off on board ship, the first thing your companions do is to rush and clamor over the bunks, seeking associates from whom they have been temporarily separated, and the first hour is taken up in greetings and questions. All are jolly; singing breaks out from all sides. This lasts the first day. Next day the singing continues, but in knots just as you hear it in a fair. After a few days a centralization principle prevails, and the singing becomes limited to public performances in the hatchway in the evening. This, alternating with step-dancing, an exhibition which gives great delight, continues for some weeks. Then it partially loses its interest, and dies out, and cards take possession of the ship, maintaining their ascendancy to the close of the voyage. By day there are faint attempts on the part of the scripture-reader to carry on a school, but they come to nothing. The greater part of the day is divided between cleaning the berths and decks, washing and cooking, smoking and reading. There

will be a few fights. These begin shortly after the men are put on salt rations, and continue at intervals throughout the voyage. They are seldom interfered with, it being thought best to let the men settle their quarrels among themselves in their own way. The rations are sound and good—good pork, good pease-soup, good “plum-dough;” but you will do well to have yourself provided with money (which can be sent to you after you are embarked and before you sail), and should keep a servant. You will find plenty able and willing to cater and cook for you, and do all the pushing and rough work, and take care of your clothes, for the sake of the better table your service will afford them. Money and a man will be the greatest comfort to you—do not forget this. It will take away the chief discomforts peculiar to a voyage of the sort, and leave you little to do but take your ease. Avoid accepting any office or “billet.” A billet is very harassing, attended with some responsibility and not a few annoyances connected with the men, without any adequate compensation. It was all very well when it was rewarded with twelve months’ remission, but the three or four weeks now given are really not worth thinking about in Australia to a long-sentence man, and whatever the surgeon-superintendent may tell you, he can get you no more now. You should also get a berth amidships. If you are not allotted one, you can exchange into one for a few shillings at the commencement of the voyage. You will find this part of the ship better for sleeping and for your meals. There is more air, more room, more quiet than in the other parts of the vessel. You have every prospect of arriving at your destination safely and even quickly. The vessels taken up for this service are all first-class boats of 900 or 1,000 tons, and are selected carefully. On the other hand, as the object of the surgeon in charge is not so much a swift voyage as a safe one, you will escape the wet berths and critical situations of crack liners on other stations.

The first you see of the land of your exile is a rather low coast-line, broken by two rocky islands, which rise out of a long low reef of sand and rock, and assist in forming a moderately safe roadstead. As you round the northernmost of these, and approach the land more closely, you see it to be covered with a wild heathery scrub, out of which rise here and there wild-looking trees, scantily leaved and of no great beauty. The town of Freemantle, before which you will anchor, is not unlike some of the small sea-side watering-places in England, and looks pretty and cheerful. The stone of which the houses are built is very white, and the place looks new and substantial. Conspicuous above all rises the prison, or, as it is here called, the “establishment.” To this you will be conveyed in detachments in the course of a day or two after anchoring, merely accompanied by a couple of officers, and without parade or ostentation. Your first impression, on finding yourself within the gates, is a mixed one. The courtyard is very quiet—not unlike that of a large deserted country inn, and the inspection you undergo before going to the baths is a quiet affair, conducted without fuss or nonsense, and only carried just

as far as is necessary. So far so good. But the windows of the great building before you, being all of a thick grey glass, impress you most unpleasantly. You will, however, find them all right—just what they should be. They are semi-transparent; but the light does not come in deformed, and their opacity is not more than is necessary for the strong light of the climate. After inspection on entrance you go to the baths, and now is the time for you to secure any money you may have with you. But if you will be advised by me, you will either get some one of the warders whom you have made a friend of during the voyage to take charge of it, or else intrust it to your ship-servant or other professional whom you can trust. From the baths, which are sensibly and conveniently contrived, you pass into a great yard to be shaved and have your hair cut, both which operations, let me tell you, will be performed most effectually. Every particle of whisker, every hair of your head which can be made to pass through a flat comb, is taken off unsparingly. They cut the hair pretty close in England, but what they leave on there is a “luxuriant growth” compared with what they leave on in Australia. It will, however, be a matter of little moment to you, and you will see that your position in all substantial points is improved immensely. Acquainted only with the English prisons where you must march in closely-defined lines and have an officer looking sharply after you at every corner, and have doors here and bars there, and where there are ringing voices of command on every side of you, you seem not to be in prison at all. You find yourself confined, indeed, to the yard, but you see no officer, except perhaps one at the door, and find that you can walk about and talk with your friends as you please. So long as there is no disturbance there is no interference. The officer on duty is to the prisoners in their exercise-yards what the policeman is to the public at a fair or flower-show. He is there for the preservation of order, or to hold the entrance to some forbidden avenue. The Australian system aims at being as far as possible self-acting. Order is sought to be obtained, not by an incessant display of force, and by making the presence and power of authority felt every minute of the day, but by an appeal to the good sense of the men themselves, and by calling on a certain portion of them to assist in all those duties where a paid officer is not actually necessary. These men are denominated constables, and have a certain remission for their services, and are probably really more useful in keeping the men contented and orderly than any officers could be. At all events the system, as far as the preservation of order and regularity is concerned, is perfectly successful. No English prison is half as safe from émeutes, no, nor as orderly, as the establishment at Fremantle. The men, who know their being left in a great measure to carry out the discipline of the prison themselves depends on there being no call for a more stringent system, fall into their duties quietly and regularly, and, of three or four hundred men within or about the prison, it is rare that any one is not in his place. This offers a pleasing contrast to

the English public-works prisons, where the men, when not actually at work, are in a constant state of drill and irritation, and where, with an officer at every corner, there is no security against an émeute at any moment. This Australian plan of keeping the red rag out of sight will afford you a relief you cannot now estimate. Passing from the yard to your cell, you find fresh cause for satisfaction. In size, the cells here are little larger than the iron cages at Portsmouth; but they are built of stone, have a good window, are of good height, and are plastered and whitewashed, have a firm table and sufficient conveniences, and are really cheerful, airy little dens. What is more, you are not shut up in them. You have, when not at work, full liberty of entry and egress. For about ten minutes at breakfast-time, and the same at dinner and tea, you must be in them; but even then the doors are left open. All the rest of the day out of working hours you can go down to the yard or stay in your cell—as you please. The doors are closed only at night. This, again, is good.

Should you be retained at the establishment at Freemantle, it will be the greatest comfort to you. Its humanizing and quieting effect on the minds of the prisoners is most marked. It is possible, however, that you may have to go up the country, or into the bush, as it is called. Should you be sent to a road-party, you may perhaps have reason to regret this; but I myself regard the being attached to a road-party, even as a simple labourer, as better than anything inside the walls of a prison. You may have to live in a hut, but a hut is by no means an uncomfortable lodging. You associate with it wet and dirt and the assaults of not a few of the most annoying varieties of the insect tribe. But if you suffer from any of these, it will be your own fault. A hut is, in this country, one of the cleanest and most pleasant habitations you can have. The roof, formed of the rush of the blackboy (grass-tree), keeps it cool in summer and dry in winter, while, if it is at all cold, you can always have a glorious fire. Your bed, made of the same rushes, is springy and clean, and, by a little care, may be kept free from insects during every part of the year. In two-thirds of the houses of the country you are for many months of the year devoured with insects and cannot get rid of them, but in a hut you need have none. And then you are only required to do a fair day's work in proportion to your strength; while out of working hours you are left to yourself entirely, being desired only to keep within certain limits defined by the officer in charge of the party. Some other little advantages there are in road-parties which you will find out for yourself. But I should add that what I have said of these road-parties does not apply so fully to those close to Freemantle and Perth. These being mere suburban affairs, and close under the eye of the colonial public, are displays of prison vigilance and severity. The hot sand and want of shade, moreover, make the work very oppressive. It is certainly better to be in the "establishment" than at one of these parties.

But, although I have thought it well to notice the road-parties so far, you will probably be made a clerk in the chief establishment. The system being one which aims at being as far as possible self-acting, it is the custom to put every prisoner to the work at which he is likely to be most useful. If he is able as a clerk to do work for which Government must otherwise pay from 80*l.* to 100*l.* a year, he is not employed, as in England, on some physical labour of which he understands nothing, but he is placed at a desk amongst books and accounts. And such will almost certainly be your own lot. The establishment at Freemantle being the centre from which all the convict stations or dépôts scattered throughout the colony receive instructions and supplies, and through which almost everything connected with the service ultimately passes, affords occupation for a large staff, which is with difficulty kept up to the necessary strength. This causes every educated prisoner to be pounced on by one or other department as soon as he arrives. There is occasionally a struggle for his service between different departments. Again, you may be sent as clerk to one of the country establishments. This will be still better. The clerkships at these "dépôts," as they are called, are the best positions in the service, sufficiently good to compensate for their one drawback—the loss of society. This is a great loss, as the society obtainable in the Freemantle prison, where there are some of the best informed and most agreeable men of the day, is really most enjoyable. But the greater freedom and superior accommodation you will enjoy at the dépôt is to most men more than an equivalent. You can scarcely, however, hope for one of these posts till you have been at the establishment some time, as they are generally applied for some months before they fall due. Again, if you make yourself really useful, you will never be sent to them, for it is a rule at the chief establishment never to send away its best men. You get no reward there for usefulness—none. You might think that at least you would get some extra remission, or that the authorities might interest themselves to find you a situation on your discharge. Nothing of the kind. I believe I do injustice to no one when I say that there is not a head of any department in the establishment who would interest himself to find you a situation on your discharge. As for remission, you just get your ordinary stages as you would if you were nearly useless. It is otherwise at the country dépôts, but this is the rule at the establishment. Beware, therefore, of being too useful. Just do what is required and nothing beyond. It is, perhaps, the true theory of comfort everywhere. Placed at work for which you are fitted, your time will now pass quickly, and, on the whole, pleasantly. You rise early, have regular employment, good society, a diet plain and somewhat hard, but wholesome and substantial, have tea in place of gruel, and reasonable time for exercise and self-improvement. The library is miserably chosen and badly managed, but you can find some readable books in it.

In Australia a quieting, self-acting, improving system is substituted for one whose only real result, and whose seeming object (if one did

not know the better spirit by which Government is really actuated) is, to use a rather vulgar but very expressive phrase, to "establish a raw." The Australian system has to deal with men who must speedily form part of a large and formidable class in the country's population, and seeks to prepare them gradually to act sensibly and temperately. There the officering, keeping down, parading, drilling, grinding system will not do. There, the bond class stand in the proportion of fully five-sevenths of the entire grown male population, and are perfectly conscious of their power, and only quiet and orderly because they see there is nothing to be gained by a contrary course. To keep up the irritation-principle, therefore, is out of the question. An émeute at Portsmouth or Portland is a mere trifle—an affair of a few hours—and ends where it began. But were a serious outbreak to occur at Freemantle, no one could tell where it would end.

The Australian prison and its stations have their defects, of course, as have other prisons. The system is not perfect, and suffers, as do all systems, by imperfect working. It has amongst its officials childish old men, who are kept on because there is no excuse for getting rid of them, other than there has been for years; and there are low blackguards amongst its subordinate officers who are kept on because they are smart men, and see that the pots and pans are kept up to the required brightness. But the management is, on the whole, judicious, and has good results. One experiment is being now carried out in Australia with regard to one particular class of prisoners—principally those recommitted for attempting to escape—which stands in most unhappy contrast with that part of the system which I have been describing. It is called the "chain gang." It was determined to stop attempts to escape by terrific punishment—namely, heavy irons in a separate and dark cell for from fifty to a hundred days, with a diet of water and one pound of bread. The irons, weighing, some of them, twenty-eight pounds, were not to be removed day or night. Now this punishment is really tremendous. The unfortunate runaways come out of their fifty or seventy days' confinement weak, sickly, famine-stricken men, looking much as persons do who are in a consumption. In this state they are made to work in heavy irons on the roads, and are kept very strictly to very hard work. If it be summer they have the no slight additional torture of working, heavily ironed as they are, under a burning sun. But this punishment is really ineffective. Nine-tenths of the attempts to escape are now from this very chain gang. Flogging, the necessity for which this punishment was intended to obviate, has been added to it, and added in vain. The heavy irons never off for a moment—with them in the bath, with them in bed, with them painfully at every turn of the body, sleeping or waking—make the men so desperate that the poor fellows break, in some marvellous way, the very heaviest irons, and try continually to get away, at any risk. The men who form this gang are by no means the worst in the prison; but they are under a mania for running away, and the more heavily they are

ironed, the more will they try to get free. In the meantime, the effect on the poor fellows is ruinous; every day does something towards making them hard, fierce, savage. Break them down you never can. And when they come to their liberty, it will be found that they have been made very dangerous men, and society may one day think that so natural and harmless a thing as an attempt to get out of prison called for a punishment somewhat less severe than one to which death itself were leniency. The experiment was not, I believe, unkindly meant; it was thought that a very little of such a punishment would produce the desired effect, and that attempts to escape would be stopped at once; but this did not prove to be the case, and successive links were added to the ponderous chain till it became the terrific punishment it is. Bad in principle, bad in its results, its continuance is the more to be regretted as it is the one great blot in an administration that has been, on the whole, sensible and manly.

Such is the Australian system inside the prison. I wish I could speak as favourably of the system outside—the system *i.e.* to which a man becomes subject on his obtaining his ticket-of-leave. It is as bad as it can be. Professedly aiming at making the released man an energetic, respectable, successful member of the community, and attaching him to the colony, its every rule seems formed with a view of either disabling or disgusting him. It is a system of disabilities. Its first act on his going out is to dictate the field in which he is to labour, and to depreciate the value of his services. Before he is released he must find a master! Occasionally, indeed, a man is allowed to set up on his own account, but he must previously satisfy the resident magistrate that he is likely to be successful; and this functionary, whose standing orders are to give as few independent tickets as possible, and who is seldom the man fitted to be a censor of trades, most commonly refuses. As a consequence, many of the best disposed and most useful men give up all thought of doing anything in the colony, or even sink into dissipation and recklessness. Two instances to the point have come under my own notice. Two men, one a moulder and the other a glass-blower, believed there was a good opening for their respective trades, and some merchants thought so too, and offered to assist them with plant and orders. The men, having sufficient capital to start, applied for tickets on their own hands. The one was refused because the magistrate could not see how such a trade could succeed, the other was refused without reason given. In both cases the men went and spent their money in disgust. And so it is again and again. Men come out intending to be sober and live respectably, but are so disgusted with the discouragements and obstructions that meet them just when they expect a helping hand, that they fling away all their good resolutions in despair, throw down their money on the first public-house table, and spend it in a “glorious rouse” with their friends. The next disability is the confining each ticket-man to a particular district, out of which he must not pass without the authorities being satisfied that the transfer applied for will not derange

the balance of labour, and that it is otherwise desirable. Even where a man has received a positive engagement from an employer in another district, he cannot enter on it until an order for his transfer has been obtained, and this seldom costs less than ten days or a fortnight, and where the applicant is at a great distance from head-quarters, very much more. Attached to this regulation requiring prisoners at large to find masters is another highly injurious. All do not find masters, or, at all events, do not succeed in the two or three days allowed them for the purpose; or after they have found a service they do not always stay in it; in either case they are sent on public works at one of the Government dépôts. These dépôts are branch convict establishments in different parts of the colony, through which are sent supplies to the various road-parties. They are commissariat or engineer dépôts, and are in the charge of one of the higher subordinate officers of the service. They have hospitals attached to them for the reception of patients from the road-parties, a resident magistrate sits at them on cases of breach of discipline, and they have a radius of some twenty miles. All this is very well, and the arrangements are perhaps as good as any that could be made. They answer all necessary purposes, and work well. But to force men on these dépôts, as is done at present, because they are for the moment out of employment, is radically bad. The road-parties to which unemployed ticket-holders are attached are in all respects under the same regulations as the convict road-parties, except that the men are not required to work so hard, and that they occasionally receive passes to seek for employment. To oblige a man, therefore, directly he is discharged from service to go straight to the dépôt, and if he cannot by a two days' pass which he receives after being there a day find a fresh employer, to send him on the roads, is really to send him back to prison. This cannot be right. Without going into the question as to whether it is well for able-bodied men to have a workhouse to retire to in a country where, employed or unemployed, no one need starve, it cannot be well to force them into one. The effect often is to quench any little desire they may still have to be independent. The fact that they are mere prisoners at large without power of independent action is so pressed on them that too many of them resign themselves to their condition, and prefer degradation and a life without care or trouble to freedom and difficulties. Once sent on dépôt, there are many hundreds who, except for a month or two in the year, never leave it. The road-party, be it understood, offers some advantages to a working man which are not afforded by private service. The latter is a state of freedom, but there is hard work, irregular meals, contemptuous treatment. There are few places under colonial masters where the ticket-of-leave workman is not made to feel his position. At the road-party, on the contrary, all is regular, cleanly, decent; the work moderate, the officer conciliating; and, above all, there is the pleasant party of old friends sitting round the great wood fire in the evening, and talking over old times. I know men who have been on these parties for years, and would not leave them for

any service in the colony. They get a pass occasionally to look for work, but it is only used to enable them to be present at some spree of which they have had intelligence. There are many who never intend to leave permanently till they are due for their conditional pardon. And yet, almost all these are men who surrendered their freedom at first reluctantly, and who could find for themselves a comfortable subsistence. There is such an abundance of small edible wild game, and it is so easily snared or caught, that a man need never be at a loss for food. With a dog and gun he can always keep himself well. There is sale for the flesh of some, and for the skins or furs of everything that runs. Again, the wild products of the forest, as manna, gum, palm cotton, and bark, afford another means by which a man free to move about and seek them may get a living. Again, if a ticket-man is ever hard up, the hand of every one of his class is open to him. Starvation in a country like this is impossible, except to the man who has his hands tied.

Another great mistake of our disability system is the not allowing the released prisoner the protection of the law. From the time of his leaving prison to that of his receiving his conditional pardon he is under arbitrary power, and for an offence of the most trivial nature may, at the discretion of the sitting magistrate, be sentenced to several years' imprisonment. Two men were recently condemned, the one to five years' imprisonment for being suspected of dropping some tobacco at a road-party, and the other to three years' imprisonment for being suspected of leaving some spirits at a road-party. I say *suspected*, for the whole evidence in the latter case was that of a gentleman who saw the prisoner "walking in the neighbourhood of the party." On this last point I can speak most positively, as an intimate friend of my own was present during the so-called trial, and related the particulars to me immediately afterwards. I do not say that such judgments are given frequently, or that the magistrates as a body are either cruel or unjust. But such judgments do occur, and this creates in the mind of the ticket-of-leave holder a feeling of insecurity. Unfortunately, too, it seems rather a point with the authorities to press on the ticket-holder this fact of his want of security in the most offensive way. So particular are they in asserting their irresponsibility and absolutism that one reads notices in the public prints that such and such a ticket-of-leave holder has been "sent back to the establishment (prison) at the recommendation of the resident magistrate," without mention of any offence.

Again: you cannot move without reporting yourself here and reporting yourself there, and obtaining passes, getting passes viséed, passes extended, &c. You have a journey of five miles to take, and you must go perhaps twenty to obtain a pass, and again go twenty miles to report yourself on your return;—or you want to leave a town on urgent business, and you must wait till next day because it is now past noon, and the magistrate has done sitting. In any case you must lose half a day

hanging about the court. We may be in a wilderness and escape many of what Humboldt terms "the errors of a long civilization," but we have red tape enough for the oldest government in the world. The discouragement which such a system offers to the ticket-holder must be evident. But there is one circumstance which may not occur to you in England which makes this system specially injurious here. There is in Australia, side by side with the great bond class, a small free class. This class, far inferior in numbers to the class beside it, as far as the adult population is concerned, is inferior also in energy and intelligence. Hence arises between the two classes the bitterest hatred. The free class, jealous of the superiority of the bondsmen in all essentials, yet affects to look down on it, and withdraws within itself, only striking some side-blow at it through the press when it has an opportunity. The bond class, on the other hand, hate the free, whom they regard really and unaffectedly as almost beneath their contempt, for their greater privileges. No outbreak ever will take place—no general one, at least—for the simple reason that there is nothing to make it worth while; but they none the less sincerely or deeply both hate the colonial and despise him. It is unfortunate, but the Government, in legislating for the prisoner, have forgot they were legislating for a colony. They saw before them only dangerous men to be guarded, not men to be encouraged to embrace a new life and form a new state. The attaching excessive punishments to slight faults, as if discharged prisoners were more perfect than other men; the judgments of private tribunals; the surveillance of the police, are things which can nowhere work well. But to form an idea of the effect of the disability system here, you must suppose all London under ticket-of-leave law with the exception, say, of the freemen of the City.

Still you may greatly modify the evils natural to the position, by taking a judicious line. Live in the bush, and the evils of the system will press lightly on you. Take up a grant of land far back in a fine hunting country, build a comfortable hut on it, try to get a pleasant companion and a couple of good dogs, get permission to carry a gun, visit the town only when necessary for obtaining supplies, have a useful horse and a good spring-cart, and keep away from every one, and you will be practically as free in your Australian forest-home as if you were on the untrodden shores of the Orinoco, and much more comfortable. You will of course choose a fine country. I should advise you to be near a good lake. You will have no difficulty in finding a spot to suit you, as you only want a small plot of land for a station, and this may be rented, if not bought, for a nominal sum anywhere. I should not advise you to farm, but you must have some land, as the possession of what is called a "station" will obtain you a freedom and immunities which you would not otherwise have. Having once got what you want, keep out of sight and out of mind. You must, of course, have money, but that I suppose you to have—enough, at least, to do what I have advised. Much is not necessary. The forest will supply you with meat. Kangaroo, exactly

like fine beef; opossum, like rabbit; kangaroo-rat, like chicken; bandicoots, like partridge; these, with pigeons, parrots, emu, wild turkey, and other of your feathered neighbours, will leave little to be desired in the way of animal food, though you may add tame fowl if you wish. Your lake will supply you abundantly with the finest fish, and your garden with almost every kind of vegetable you can desire, and of fruit, too, if you could wait for it. As it is, it will yield you grapes in two years, and some other fruits in one. To be supplied with milk and butter, you have only to keep three or four goats, and if you keep a small piggery you can even indulge in pork. With a good selection of books, and, if you are a smoker, a supply of good tobacco, what can you want more? Society, say you? No doubt; and many of the other good things that belong to older countries; but you have here a life which is not only practically free, but with which you may be well content for a few years.

Such is our present prison system, and such are the opportunities and position of the ticket-holder in Australia, as they have presented themselves to me. The prison system now in operation in England seems to be part good, part very bad. The separate system I regard as most useful—as useful as any prison system could be. The effect of being almost always alone, and brought in contact only with good books and good men, leads to reflection and regret, if not to penitence. I remember, as probably does every one else, being greatly amused at the scene in *David Copperfield*, where the two arch-soundiels Lättimer and Heep, are represented as describing the happy effect of the discipline of the separate system on themselves. The description is somewhat highly-coloured, but I can quite conceive that such scenes have not only really taken place, but that the penitents who may have figured in them may have spoken in good faith. The frame of mind into which a man is brought by the separate system (as carried on at Pentonville—the only prison of the kind of which I have had any lengthened experience) is, to say the least, one of serious thought and good resolves. I should not think it would be sufficiently powerful to support a professional thief against the allurements of his old trade, even if he were kept under this discipline during the whole term of his sentence. But the effect of this discipline on the mind is undoubtedly good. For that portion of the prisoners which does not consist of professional thieves, and which comes not from the dangerous but from the working classes, it is all that is required, and the only part of our system to which they should be subjected.

We have no right to throw these men into a mass of crime and corruption, whatever right we may have to punish them physically. This is recognized in the American system, which does not allow them to be even seen by those who might subsequently prove an annoyance and injury, much less subject them to a close communication with men of the foulest conversation. This is an act of justice and economy which may be well copied. The thief who has plundered society systematically all his life, and is her

natural open enemy, is indulged by being associated with his old friends and men of his own tastes and habits. The working man who has been led into some one crime, is made to live with others who, considerate as they may be to his personal feelings when addressing or speaking close to him, are constantly filling his mind with images of which he may never rid himself all his life. Besides, it is absurd to talk about reforming criminals when you ruthlessly corrupt those with whom lies your only chance. For charity's sake these men, at least, should be kept "in separates," or only associate with each other. For professional thieves I conceive the best system would be the separate for a short sentence, transportation for a long one. I see no use in applying two systems to any one sentence. If it is a first offence, the separate plan might, and I think should, be followed for the whole term of imprisonment. In the case of a second offence, or a long sentence, I would transport the offender at once. There is no reformation (proper) to be expected from transportation, nor perhaps from any other system, but it gives a chance to a man to take up a respectable life and to keep within the law. But it is quite useless to make men "good" in separates and then "bad" by bringing them together. As to the best mode of carrying out transportation, or the best place to transport criminals to in future, it is not for me to say; but the shorter the time the men are together, and the sooner the transported criminal merges into the exile, the better. The men should, moreover, be sent to some country where they can make themselves a home, and which they may hope eventually to make prosperous. Western Australia would have been an excellent place, had it not been for the strange fancy of making a system of prison regulations the law of a people, and transforming a whole country into a convict establishment, and virtually working the finest part of the population in irons.



WAS NOT THE PRICE IN HER HAND?

THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

MAY, 1866.

The Claverings.

CHAPTER X.

FLORENCE BURTON AT THE RECTORY.



HARRY CLAVERING went down to Stratton, slept one night at old Mr. Burton's house, and drove Florence over to Clavering,—twenty miles across the country,—on the following day. This journey together had been looked forward to with great delight by both of them, and Florence, in spite of the snubbing which she had received from her lover because of her prudence, was very happy as she seated herself alongside of him in the vehicle which had been sent over from the rectory, and which he called a trap. Not a word had as yet been said between them as to that snubbing, nor was Harry minded that anything should be said. He meant to carry on his revenge by being dumb on that subject. But such was not Florence's in-

tention. She desired not only to have her own way in this matter, but desired also that he should assent to her arrangements.

It was a charming day for such a journey. It was cold, but not wet.

enough to make them uncomfortable. There was a wind, but not wind enough to torment them. Once there came on a little shower, which just sufficed to give Harry an opportunity of wrapping his companion very closely, but he had hardly completed the ceremony before the necessity for it was over. They both agreed that this mode of travelling was infinitely preferable to a journey by railroad, and I myself should be of the same opinion if one could always make one's journeys under the same circumstances. And it must be understood that Harry, though no doubt he was still taking his revenge on Florence by abstaining from all allusion to her letter, was not disposed to make himself otherwise disagreeable. He played his part of lover very well, and Florence was supremely happy.

"Harry," she said, when the journey was more than half completed, "you never told me what you thought of my letter."

"Which letter?" But he knew very well which was the letter in question.

"My prudent letter,—written in answer to yours that was very imprudent."

"I thought there was nothing more to be said about it."

"Come, Harry, don't let there be any subject between us that we don't care to think about and discuss. I know what you meant by not answering me. You meant to punish me,—did you not, for having an opinion different from yours? Is not that true, Harry?"

"Punish you,—no; I did not want to punish you. It was I that was punished, I think."

"But you know I was right. Was I not right?"

"I think you were wrong, but I don't want to say anything more about it now."

"Ah, but, Harry, I want you to talk about it. Is it not everything to me,—everything in this world,—that you and I should agree about this? I have nothing else to think of but you. I have nothing to hope for but that I may live to be your wife. My only care in the world is my care for you! Come, Harry, don't be glum with me."

"I am not glum."

"Speak a nice word to me. Tell me that you believe me when I say that it is not of myself I am thinking, but of you."

"Why can't you let me think for myself in this?"

"Because you have got to think for me."

"And I think you'd do very well on the income we've got. If you'll consent to marry, this summer, I won't be glum, as you call it, a moment longer."

"No, Harry; I must not do that. I should be false to my duty to you if I did."

"Then it's no use saying anything more about it."

"Look here, Harry, if an engagement for two years is tedious to you——"

"Of course it is tedious. Is not waiting for anything always tedious? There's nothing I hate so much as waiting."

"But listen to me," said she, gravely. "If it is too tedious, if it is more than you think you can bear without being unhappy, I will release you from your engagement."

"Florence!"

"Hear me to the end. It will make no change in me; and then if you like to come to me again at the end of the two years, you may be sure of the way in which I shall receive you."

"And what good would that do?"

"Simply this good, that you would not be bound in a manner that makes you unhappy. If you did not intend that when you asked me to be your wife — Oh, Harry, all I want is to make you happy. That is all that I care for, all that I think about!"

Harry swore to her with ten thousand oaths that he would not release her from any part of her engagement with him, that he would give her no loophole of escape from him, that he intended to hold her so firmly that if she divided herself from him, she should be accounted among women a paragon of falseness. He was ready, he said, to marry her to-morrow. That was his wish, his idea of what would be best for both of them;—and after that, if not to-morrow, then on the next day, and so on till the day should come on which she should consent to become his wife. He went on also to say that he should continue to torment her on the subject about once a week till he had induced her to give way; and then he quoted a Latin line to show that a constant dropping of water will hollow a stone. This was somewhat at variance with a declaration he had made to Mrs. Burton, in Onslow Crescent, to the effect that he would never speak to Florence again upon the subject; but then men do occasionally change their minds, and Harry Clavering was a man who often changed his.

Florence, as he made the declaration above described, thought that he played his part of lover very well, and drew herself a little closer to him as she thanked him for his warmth. "Dear Harry, you are so good and so kind, and I do love you so truly!" In this way the journey was made very pleasantly, and when Florence was driven up to the rectory door she was quite contented with her coachman.

Harry Clavering, who is the hero of our story, will not, I fear, have hitherto presented himself to the reader as having much of the heroic nature in his character. It will, perhaps, be complained of him that he is fickle, vain, easily led, and almost as easily led to evil as to good. But it should be remembered that hitherto he has been rather hardly dealt with, in these pages, and that his faults and weaknesses have been exposed almost unfairly. That he had such faults and was subject to such weaknesses may be believed of him; but there may be a question whether as much evil would not be known of most men, let them be heroes or not, as heroes, if their characters were, so to say, turned inside out before our eyes.

Harry Clavering, fellow of his college, six feet high, with handsome face and person, and with plenty to say for himself on all subjects, was esteemed highly and regarded much by those who knew him, in spite of those little foibles which marred his character; and I must beg the reader to take the world's opinion about him, and not to estimate him too meanly thus early in this history of his adventures.

If this tale should ever be read by any lady who, in the course of her career, has entered a house under circumstances similar to those which had brought Florence Burton to Clavering rectory, she will understand how anxious must have been that young lady when she encountered the whole Clavering family in the hall. She had been blown about by the wind, and her cloaks and shawls were heavy on her, and her hat was a little out of shape,—from some fault on the part of Harry, as I believe,—and she felt herself to be a dowdy as she appeared among them. What would they think of her, and what would they think of Harry in that he had chosen such an one to be his wife? Mrs. Clavering had kissed her before she had seen that lady's face; and Mary and Fanny had kissed her before she knew which was which; and then a stout, clerical gentleman kissed her who, no doubt, was Mr. Clavering, senior. After that, another clerical gentleman, very much younger and very much slighter, shook hands with her. He might have kissed her, too, had he been so minded, for Florence was too confused to be capable of making any exact reckoning in the matter. He might have done so—that is, as far as Florence was concerned. It may be a question whether Mary Clavering would not have objected; for this clerical gentleman was the Rev. Edward Fielcing who was to become her husband in three days' time.

"Now, Florence," said Fanny, "come upstairs into mamma's room and have some tea, and we'll look at you. Harry, you needn't come. You've had her to yourself for a long time, and can have her again in the evening."

Florence, in this way, was taken upstairs and found herself seated by a fire, while three pairs of hands were taking from her her shawls and hat and cloak, almost before she knew where she was.

"It is so odd to have you here," said Fanny. "We have only one brother, so, of course, we shall make very much of you. Isn't she nice, mamma?"

"I'm sure she is; very nice. But I shouldn't have told her so before her face, if you hadn't asked the question."

"That's nonsense, mamma. You mustn't believe mamma when she pretends to be grand and sententious. It's only put on as a sort of company air, but we don't mean to make company of you."

"Pray don't," said Florence.

"I'm so glad you are come just at this time," said Mary. "I think so much of having Harry's future wife at my wedding. I wish we were both going to be married the same day."

"But we are not going to be married for ever so long. Two years hence has been the shortest time named."

"Don't be sure of that, Florence," said Fanny. "We have all of us received a special commission from Harry to talk you out of that heresy; have we not, mamma?"

"I think you had better not tease Florence about that immediately on her arrival. It's hardly fair." Then, when they had drunk their tea, Florence was taken away to her own room, and before she was allowed to go downstairs she was intimate with both the girls, and had so far overcome her awe of Harry's mother as to be able to answer her without confusion.

"Well, sir, what do you think of her?" said Harry to his father, as soon as they were alone.

"I have not had time to think much of her yet. She seems to be very pretty. She isn't so tall as I thought she would be."

"No; she's not tall," said Harry, in a voice of disappointment.

"I've no doubt we shall like her very much. What money is she to have?"

"A hundred a year while her father lives."

"That's not much."

"Much or little, it made no difference with me. I should never have thought of marrying a girl for her money. It's a kind of thing that I hate. I almost wish she was to have nothing."

"I shouldn't refuse it if I were you."

"Of course, I shan't refuse it; but what I mean is that I never thought about it when I asked her to have me; and I shouldn't have been a bit more likely to ask her if she had ten times as much."

"A fortune with one's wife isn't a bad thing for a poor man, Harry."

"But a poor man must be poor in more senses than one when he looks about to get a fortune in that way."

"I suppose you won't marry just yet," said the father. "Including everything, you would not have five hundred a year, and that would be very close work in London."

"It's not quite decided yet, sir. As far as I am myself concerned, I think that people are a great deal too prudent about money. I believe I could live as a married man on a hundred a year, if I had no more; and as for London, I don't see why London should be more expensive than any other place. You can get exactly what you want in London, and make your halfpence go farther there than anywhere else."

"And your sovereigns go quicker," said the rector.

"All that is wanted," said Harry, "is the will to live on your income, and a little firmness in carrying out your plans."

The rector of Clavering, as he heard all this wisdom fall from his son's lips, looked at Harry's expensive clothes, at the ring on his finger, at the gold chain on his waistcoat, at the studs in his shirt, and smiled gently. He was by no means so clever a man as his son, but he knew something

more of the world, and though not much given to general reading, he had read his son's character. "A great deal of firmness and of fortitude also is wanted for that kind of life," he said. "There are men who can go through it without suffering, but I would not advise any young man to commence it in a hurry. If I were you I should wait a year or two. Come, let's have a walk; that is, if you can tear yourself away from your lady-love for an hour. If there is not Saul coming up the avenue! Take your hat, Harry, and we'll get out the other way. He only wants to see the girls about the school, but if he catches us he'll keep us for an hour." Then Harry asked after Mr. Saul's love-affairs. "I've not heard one single word about it since you went away," said the rector. "It seems to have passed off like a dream. He and Fanny go on the same as ever, and I suppose he knows that he made a fool of himself." But in this matter the rector of Clavering was mistaken. Mr. Saul did not by any means think that he had made a fool of himself.

"He has never spoken a word to me since," said Fanny to her brother that evening; "that is, not a word as to what occurred then. Of course it was very embarrassing at first, though I don't think he minded it much. He came after a day or two just the same as ever, and he almost made me think that he had forgotten it."

"And he wasn't confused?"

"Not at all. He never is. The only difference is that I think he scolds me more than he used to do."

"Scold you!"

"Oh dear, yes; he always scolded me if he thought there was anything wrong, especially about giving the children holidays. But he does it now more than ever."

"And how do you bear it?"

"In a half-and-half sort of way. I laugh at him, and then do as I'm bid. He makes everybody do what he bids them at Clavering,—except papa, sometimes. But he scolds him, too. I heard him the other day in the library."

"And did my father take it from him?"

"He did, in a sort of a way. I don't think papa likes him; but then he knows, and we all know, that he is so good. He never spares himself in anything. He has nothing but his curacy, and what he gives away is wonderful."

"I hope he won't take to scolding me," said Harry, proudly.

"As you don't concern yourself about the parish, I should say that you're safe. I suppose he thinks mamma does everything right, for he never scolds her."

"There is no talk of his going away."

"None at all. I think we should all be sorry, because he does so much good."

Florence reigned supreme in the estimation of the rectory family all the evening of her arrival and till after breakfast the next morning, but

then the bride elect was restored to her natural pre-eminence. This, however, lasted only for two days, after which the bride was taken away. The wedding was very nice, and pretty, and comfortable; and the people of Clavering were much better satisfied with it than they had been with that other marriage which has been mentioned as having been celebrated in Clavering Church. The rectory family was generally popular, and everybody wished well to the daughter who was being given away. When they were gone there was a breakfast at the rectory, and speeches were made with much volubility. On such an occasion the rector was a great man, and Harry also shone in conspicuous rivalry with his father. But Mr. Saul's spirit was not so well tuned to the occasion as that of the rector or his son, and when he got upon his legs, and mournfully expressed a hope that his friend Mr. Fielding might be enabled to bear the trials of this life with fortitude, it was felt by them all that the speaking had better be brought to an end.

"You shouldn't laugh at him, Harry," Fanny said to her brother afterwards, almost seriously. "One man can do one thing and one another. You can make a speech better than he can, but I don't think you could preach so good a sermon."

"I declare I think you're getting fond of him after all," said Harry. Upon hearing this Fanny turned away with a look of great offence. "No one but a brother," said she, "would say such a thing as that to me, because I don't like to hear the poor man ridiculed without cause." That evening, when they were alone, Fanny told Florence the whole story about Mr. Saul. "I tell you, you know, because you're like one of ourselves now. It has never been mentioned to any one out of the family."

Florence declared that the story would be sacred with her.

"I'm sure of that, dear, and therefore I like you to know it. Of course such a thing was quite out of the question. The poor fellow has no means at all,—literally none. And then, independently of that——"

"I don't think I should ever bring myself to think of that as the first thing," said Florence.

"No, nor would I. If I really were attached to a man, I think I would tell him so, and agree to wait, either with hope or without it."

"Just so, Fanny."

"But there was nothing of that kind; and, indeed, he's the sort of man that no girl would think of being in love with,—isn't he? You see he will hardly take the trouble to dress himself decently."

"I have only seen him at a wedding, you know."

"And for him he was quite bright. But you will see plenty of him if you will go to the schools with me. And indeed he comes here a great deal, quite as much as he did before that happened. He is so good, Florence!"

"Poor man!"

"I can't in the least make out from his manner whether he has given up thinking about it. I suppose he has. Indeed, of course he has,

because he must know that it would be of no sort of use. But he is one of those men of whom you can never say whether they are happy or not ; and you never can be quite sure what may be in his mind."

"He is not bound to the place at all,—not like your father?"

"Oh, no," said Fanny, thinking perhaps that Mr. Saul might find himself to be bound to the place, though not exactly with bonds similar to those which kept her father there.

"If he found himself to be unhappy, he could go," said Florence.

"Oh, yes; he could go if he were unhappy," said Fanny. "That is, he could go if he pleased."

Lady Clavering had come to the wedding; but no one else had been present from the great house. Sir Hugh, indeed, was not at home; but, as the rector truly observed, he might have been at home if he had so pleased. "But he is a man," said the father to the son, "who always does a rude thing if it be in his power. For myself, I care nothing for him, as he knows. But he thinks that Mary would have liked to have seen him as the head of the family, and therefore ^{he} he does not come. He has greater skill in making himself odious than any man I ever knew. As for her, they say he's leading her a terrible life. And he's becoming so stingy about money, too!"

"I hear that Archie is very heavy on him."

"I don't believe that he would allow any man to be heavy on him, as you call it. Archie has means of his own, and I suppose has not run through them yet. If Hugh has advanced him money, you may be sure that he has security. As for Archie, he will come to an end very soon, if what I hear is true. They tell me he is always at Newmarket, and that he always loses."

But though Sir Hugh was thus uncourteous to the rector and to the rector's daughter, he was so far prepared to be civil to his cousin Harry, that he allowed his wife to ask all the rectory family to dine up at the house, in honour of Harry's sweetheart. Florence Burton was specially invited with Lady Clavering's sweetest smile. Florence, of course, referred the matter to her hostess, but it was decided that they should all accept the invitation. It was given, personally, after the breakfast, and it is not always easy to decline invitations so given. It may, I think, be doubted whether any man or woman has a right to give an invitation in this way, and whether all invitations so given should not be null and void, from the fact of the unfair advantage that has been taken. The man who fires at a sitting bird is known to be no sportsman. Now, the dinner-giver who catches his guest in an unguarded moment, and bags him when he has had no chance to rise upon his wing, does fire at a sitting bird. In this instance, however, Lady Clavering's little speeches were made only to Mrs. Clavering and to Florence. She said nothing personally to the rector, and he therefore might have escaped. But his wife talked him over.

"I think you should go for Harry's sake," said Mrs. Clavering.

"I don't see what good it will do Harry."

"It will show that you approve of the match."

"I don't approve or disapprove of it. He's his own master."

"But you do approve, you know, as you countenance it; and there cannot possibly be a sweeter girl than Florence Burton. We all like her, and I'm sure you seem to take to her thoroughly."

"Take to her; yes, I take to her very well. She's ladylike, and though she's no beauty, she looks pretty, and is spirited. And I ~~dare~~ say she's clever."

"And so good."

"If she's good, that's better than all. Only I don't see what they're to live on."

"But as she is here, you will go with us to the great house?"

Mrs. Clavering never asked her husband anything in vain, and the rector agreed to go. He apologized for this afterwards to his son by explaining that he did it as a duty. "It will serve for six months," he said. "If I did not go there about once in six months, there would be supposed to be a family quarrel, and that would be bad for the parish."

Harry was to remain only a week at Clavering, and the dinner was to take place the evening before he went away. On that morning he walked all round the park with Florentine,—as he had before often walked with Julia,—and took that occasion of giving her a full history of the Clavering family. "We none of us like my cousin ~~Maggie~~," he had said. "But she is at least harmless, and she means to be good-natured. She is very unlike her sister, Lady Ongar."

"So I should suppose, from what you have told me."

"Altogether an inferior being."

"And she has only one child."

"Only one,—a boy now two years old. They say he's anything but strong."

"And Sir Hugh has one brother."

"Yes; Archie Clavering. I think Archie is a worse fellow even than Hugh. He makes more attempts to be agreeable, but there is something in his eye which I always distrust. And then he is a man who does no good in the world to anybody."

"He's not married?"

"No; he's not married, and I don't suppose he ever will marry. It's on the cards, Florence, that the future baronet may be ——" Then she frowned on him, walked on quickly, and changed the conversation.

CHAPTER XI.

SIR HUGH AND HIS BROTHER ARCHIE.

THERE was a numerous gathering of Claverings in the drawing-room of the Great House when the family from the rectory arrived comprising three generations; for the nurse was in the room holding the heir in her

arms. Mrs. Clavering and Fanny of course inspected the child at once, as they were bound to do, while Lady Clavering welcomed Florence Burton. Archie spoke a word or two to his uncle, and Sir Hugh vouchsafed to give one finger to his cousin Harry by way of shaking hands with him. Then there came a feeble squeak from the infant, and there was a cloud at once upon Sir Hugh's brow. "Hermione," he said, "I wish you wouldn't have the child in here. It's not the place for him. He's always cross. I've said a dozen times I wouldn't have him down here just before dinner." Then a sign was made to the nurse, and she walked off with her burden. It was a poor, rickety, unalluring bairn, but it was all that Lady Clavering had, and she would fain have been allowed to show it to her relatives, as other mothers are allowed to do.

"Hugh," said his wife, "shall I introduce you to Miss Burton?"

Then Sir Hugh came forward and shook hands with his new guest, with some sort of apology for his remissness, while Harry stood by, glowering at him, with offence in his eye. "My father is right," he had said to himself when his cousin failed to notice Florence on her first entrance into the room; "he is impertinent as well as disagreeable. I don't care for quarrels in the parish, and so I shall let him know."

"Upon my word she's a doosed good-looking little thing," said Archie, coming up to him, after having also shaken hands with her;—"doosed good-looking, I call her."

"I'm glad you think so," said Harry, drily.

"Let's see; where was it you picked her up? I did hear, but I forget."

"I picked her up, as you call it, at Stratton, where her father lives."

"Oh, yes; I know. He's the fellow that coached you in your new business, isn't he? By-the-by, Harry, I think you've made a mess of it in changing your line. I'd have stuck to my governor's shop if I'd been you. You'd got through all the d—d fag of it, and there's the living that has always belonged to a Clavering."

"What would your brother have said if I had asked him to give it to me?"

"He wouldn't have given it of course. Nobody does give anything to anybody now-a-days. Livings are a sort of thing that people buy. But you'd have got it under favourable circumstances."

"The fact is, Archie, I'm not very fond of the church, as a profession."

"I should have thought it easy work. Look at your father. He keeps a curate and doesn't take any trouble himself. Upon my word, if I'd known as much then as I do now, I'd have had a shy for it myself. Hugh couldn't have refused it to me."

"But Hugh can't give it while his uncle holds it."

"That would have been against me to be sure, and your governor's life is pretty nearly as good as mine. I shouldn't have liked waiting; so I suppose it's as well as it is."

There may perhaps have been other reasons why Archie Clavering's regrets that he did not take holy orders were needless. He had never succeeded in learning anything that any master had ever attempted to teach him, although he had shown considerable aptitude in picking up acquirements for which no regular masters are appointed. He knew the fathers and mothers,—sires and dams I ought perhaps to say,—and grandfathers and grandmothers, and so back for some generations, of all the horses of note living in his day. He knew also the circumstances of all races,—what horses would run at them, and at what ages, what were the stakes, the periods of running, and the special interests of each affair. But not, on that account, should it be thought that the turf had been profitable to him. That it might become profitable at some future time, was possible; but Captain Archibald Clavering had not yet reached the profitable stage in the career of a betting man, though perhaps he was beginning to qualify himself for it. He was not bad-looking, though his face was unprepossessing to a judge of character. He was slight and well made, about five feet nine in height, with light brown hair, which had already left the top of his head bald, with slight whiskers, and a well-formed moustache. But the peculiarity of his face was in his eyes. His eyebrows were light-coloured and very slight, and this was made more apparent by the skin above the eyes, which was loose and hung down over the outside corners of them, giving him a look of cunning which was disagreeable. He seemed always to be speculating, counting up the odds, and calculating whether anything could be done with the events then present before him. And he was always ready to make a bet, being ever provided with a book for that purpose. He would take the odds that the sun did not rise on the morrow, and would either win the bet or wrangle in the losing of it. He would wrangle, but would do so noiselessly, never on such occasions damaging his cause by a loud voice. He was now about thirty-three years of age, and was two years younger than the baronet. Sir Hugh was not a gambler like his brother, but I do not know that he was therefore a more estimable man. He was greedy and anxious to increase his store, never willing to lose that which he possessed, fond of pleasure, but very careful of himself in the enjoyment of it, handsome, every inch an English gentleman in appearance, and therefore popular with men and women of his own class who were not near enough to him to know him well, given to but few words, proud of his name, and rank, and place, well versed in the business of the world, a match for most men in money matters, not ignorant, though he rarely opened a book, selfish, and utterly regardless of the feelings of all those with whom he came in contact. Such were Sir Hugh Clavering, and his brother the captain.

Sir Hugh took Florence in to dinner, and when the soup had been eaten made an attempt to talk to her. "How long have you been here, Miss Burton?"

"Nearly a week," said Florence.

"Ah;—you came to the wedding; I was sorry I couldn't be here. It went off very well, I suppose?"

"Very well indeed, I think."

"They're tiresome things in general,—weddings. Don't you think so?"

"Oh dear, no,—except that some person one loves is always being taken away."

"You'll be the next person to be taken away yourself, I suppose?"

"I must be the next person at home, because I am the last that is left. All my sisters are married."

"And how many are there?"

"There are five married."

"Good heavens—Five!"

"And they are all married to men in the same profession as Harry."

"Quite a family affair," said Sir Hugh. Harry, who was sitting on the other side of Florence, heard this, and would have preferred that Florence should have said nothing about her sisters. "Why, Harry," said the baronet, "if you will go into partnership with your father-in-law and all your brothers-in-law you could stand against the world."

"You might add my four brothers," said Florence, who saw no shame in the fact that they were all engaged in the same business.

"Good heaven!" exclaimed Sir Hugh, and after that he did not say much more to Florence.

The rector had taken Lady Clavering into dinner, and they two did manage to carry on between them some conversation respecting the parish affairs. Lady Clavering was not active among the poor,—nor was the rector himself, and perhaps neither of them knew how little the other did; but they could talk Clavering talk, and the parson was willing to take for granted his neighbour's good will to make herself agreeable. But Mrs. Clavering, who sat between Sir Hugh and Archie, had a very bad time of it. Sir Hugh spoke to her once during the dinner, saying that he hoped she was satisfied with her daughter's marriage; but even this he said in a tone that seemed to imply that any such satisfaction must rest on very poor grounds. "Thoroughly satisfied," said Mrs. Clavering, drawing herself up and looking very unlike the usual Mrs. Clavering of the rectory. After that there was no further conversation between her and Sir Hugh. "The worst of him to me is always this," she said that evening to her husband, "that he puts me so much out of conceit with myself. If I were with him long I should begin to find myself the most disagreeable woman in England!" "Then pray don't be with him long," said the rector.

But Archie made conversation throughout dinner, and added greatly to Mrs. Clavering's troubles by doing so. There was nothing in common between them, but still Archie went on laboriously with his work. It was a duty which he recognized, and at which he would work hard. When he had used up Mary's marriage, a subject which he economised

carefully, so that he brought it down to the roast saddle of mutton, he began upon Harry's match. When was it to be? Where were they to live? Was there any money? What manner of people were the Burtons? Perhaps he might get over it? This he whispered very lowly, and it was the question next in sequence to that about the money. When, in answer to this, Mrs. Clavering with considerable energy declared that anything of that kind would be a misfortune of which there seemed to be no chance whatever, he recovered himself as he thought very skilfully. "Oh, yes; of course; that's just what I meant;—a doosed nice girl I think her;—a doosed nice girl, all round." Archie's questions were very laborious to his fellow-labourer in his conversation because he never allowed one of them to pass without an answer. He always recognized the fact that he was working hard on behalf of society, and, as he used to say himself, that he had no idea of pulling all the coach up the hill by his own shoulders. Whenever therefore he had made his effort he waited for his companion's, looking closely into her face, cunningly driving her on, so that she also should pull her share of the coach. Before dinner was over Mrs. Clavering found the hill to be very steep, and the coach to be very heavy. "I'll bet you seven to one," said he,—and this was his parting speech as Mrs. Clavering rose up at Lady Clavering's nod,—"I'll bet you seven to one, that the whole box and dice of them are married before me,—or at any rate as soon; and I don't mean to remain single much longer, I can tell you." The "box and dice of them" was supposed to comprise Harry, Florence, Fanny, and Lady Ongar, of all of whom mention had been made, and that saving clause,—"*at any rate as soon*,"—was cunningly put in, as it had occurred to Archie that he perhaps might be married on the same day as one of those other persons. But Mrs. Clavering was not compelled either to accept or reject the bet, as she was already moving before the terms had been fully explained to her.

Lady Clavering as she went out of the room stopped a moment behind Harry's chair and whispered a word to him. "I want to speak to you before you go to-night." Then she passed on.

"What's that Hermione was saying?" asked Sir Hugh, when he had shut the door.

"She only told me that she wanted to speak to me."

"She has always got some cursed secret," said Sir Hugh. "If there is anything I hate, it's a secret." Now this was hardly fair, for Sir Hugh was a man very secret in his own affairs, never telling his wife anything about them. He kept two banker's accounts so that no banker's clerk might know how he stood as regarded ready money, and hardly treated even his lawyer with confidence.

He did not move from his own chair, so that, after dinner, his uncle was not next to him. The places left by the ladies were not closed up, and the table was very uncomfortable.

"I see they're going to have another week after this with the Hychley," said Sir Hugh to his brother.

"I suppose they will,—or ten days. Things ain't very early this year."

"I think I shall go down. It's never any use trying to hunt here after the middle of March."

"You're rather short of foxes, are you not?" said the rector, making an attempt to join the conversation.

"Upon my word I don't know anything about it," said Sir Hugh.

"There are foxes at Clavering," said Archie, recommencing his duty.

"The hounds will be here on Saturday, and I'll bet three to one I find a fox before twelve o'clock, or, say, half-past twelve,—that is, if they'll draw punctually and let me do as I like with the pack. I'll bet a guinea we find, and a guinea we run, and a guinea we kill; that is, you know, if they'll really look for a fox."

The rector had been willing to fall into a little hunting talk for the sake of society, but he was not prepared to go the length that Archie proposed to take him, and therefore the subject dropped.

"At any rate I shan't stay here after to-morrow," said Sir Hugh, still addressing himself to his brother. "Pass the wine, will you, Harry; that is, if your father is drinking any."

"No more wine for me," said the rector, almost angrily.

"Liberty Hall," said Sir Hugh; "everybody does as they like about that. I mean to have another bottle of claret. Archie, ring the bell, will you?" Captain Clavering, though he was further from the bell than his elder brother, got up and did as he was bid. The claret came, and was drunk almost in silence. The rector, though he had a high opinion of the cellar of the great house, would take none of the new bottle, because he was angry. Harry filled his glass, and attempted to say something. Sir Hugh answered him by a monosyllable, and Archie offered to bet him two to one that he was wrong.

"I'll go into the drawing-room," said the rector, getting up.

"All right," said Sir Hugh; "you'll find coffee there, I daresay. Has your father given up wine?" he asked, as soon as the door was closed.

"Not that I know of," said Harry.

"He used to take as good a whack as any man I know. The bishop hasn't put his embargo on that as well as the hunting, I hope?" To this Harry made no answer.

"He's in the blues, I think," said Archie. "Is there anything the matter with him, Harry?"

"Nothing as far as I know."

"If I were left at Clavering all the year, with nothing to do, as he is, I think I should drink a good deal of wine," said Sir Hugh. "I don't know what it is,—something in the air, I suppose,—but everybody always seems to me to be dreadfully dull here. You ain't taking any wine either. Don't stop here out of ceremony, you know, if you want to go after Miss Burton." Harry took him at his word, and went after Miss Burton, leaving the brothers together over their claret.

The two brothers remained drinking their wine, but they drank it in an uncomfortable fashion, not saying much to each other for the first ten minutes after the other Claverings were gone. Archie was in some degree afraid of his brother, and never offered to make any bets with him. Hugh had once put a stop to this altogether. "Archie," he had said, "pray understand that there is no money to be made out of me, at any rate not by you. If you lost money to me, you wouldn't think it necessary to pay; and I certainly shall lose none to you." The habit of proposing to bet had become with Archie so much a matter of course, that he did not generally intend any real speculation by his offers; but with his brother he had dropped even the habit. And he seldom began any conversation with Hugh unless he had some point to gain,—an advance of money to ask, or some favour to beg in the way of shooting, or the loan of a horse. On such occasions he would commence the negotiation with his usual diplomacy, not knowing any other mode of expressing his wishes; but he was aware that his brother would always detect his manœuvres, and expose them before he had got through his first preface; and, therefore, as I have said, he was afraid of Hugh.

"I don't know what's come to my uncle of late," said Hugh, after a while. "I think I shall have to drop them at the rectory altogether."

"He never had much to say for himself."

"But he has a mode of expressing himself without speaking, which I do not choose to put up with at my table. The fact is they are going to the mischief at the rectory. His eldest girl has just married a curate."

"Fielding has got a living."

"It's something very small then, and I suppose Fanny will marry that prig they have here. My uncle himself never does any of his own work, and now Harry is going to make a fool of himself. I used to think he would fall on his legs."

"He is a clever fellow."

"Then why is he such a fool as to marry such a girl as this, without money, good looks, or breeding? It's well for you he is such a fool, or else you wouldn't have a chance."

"I don't see that at all," said Archie.

"Julia always had a sneaking fondness for Harry, and if he had waited would have taken him now. She was very near making a fool of herself with him once, before Lord Ongar turned up."

To this Archie said nothing, but he changed colour, and it may almost be said of him that he blushed. Why he was affected in so singular a manner by his brother's words will be best explained by a statement of what took place in the back drawing-room a little later in the evening.

When Harry reached the drawing-room he went up to Lady Clavering, but she said nothing to him then of especial notice. She was talking to Mrs. Clavering while the rector was reading,—or pretending to read,—a review, and the two girls were chattering together in another part of the

room. Then they had coffee, and after awhile the two other men came in from their wine. Lady Clavering did not move at once, but she took the first opportunity of doing so, when Sir Hugh came up to Mrs. Clavering and spoke a word to her. A few minutes after that Harry found himself closeted with Lady Clavering, in a little room detached from the others, though the doors between the two were open.

"Do you know," said Lady Clavering, "that Sir Hugh has asked Julia to come here?" Harry paused a moment, and then acknowledged that he did know it.

"I hope you did not advise her to refuse."

"I advise her! Oh dear, no. She did not ask me anything about it."

"But she has refused. Don't you think she has been very wrong!"

"It is hard to say," said Harry. "You know I thought it very cruel that Hugh did not receive her immediately on her return. If I had been him I should have gone to Paris to meet her."

"It's no good talking of that now, Harry. Hugh is hard, and we all know that. Who feels it most, do you think; Julia or I? But as he has come round, what can she gain by standing off? Will it not be the best thing for her to come here?"

"I don't know that she has much to gain by it."

"Harry,—do you know that we have a plan?" "Who is we?" Harry asked; but she went on without noticing his question. "I tell you, because I believe you can help us more than any one, if you will. Only for your engagement with Miss Burton I should not mention it to you; and, but for that, the plan would, I daresay, be of no use."

"What is the plan?" said Harry, very gravely. A vague idea of what the plan might be had come across Harry's mind during Lady Clavering's last speech.

"Would it not be a good thing if Julia and Archie were to be married?" She asked the question in a quick, hesitating voice, looking at first eagerly up into his face, and then turning away her eyes, as though she were afraid of the answer she might read there. "Of course I know that you were fond of her, but all that can be nothing now."

"No," said Harry, "that can be nothing now."

"Then why shouldn't Archie have her? It would make us all so much more comfortable together. I told Archie that I should speak to you, because I know that you have more weight with her than any of us; but Hugh doesn't know that I mean it."

"Does Sir Hugh know of the,—the plan?"

"It was he who proposed it. Archie will be very badly off when he has settled with Hugh about all their money dealings. Of course Julia's money would be left in her own hands; there would be no intention to interfere with that. But the position would be so good for him; and it would, you know, put him on his legs."

"Yes," said Harry, "it would put him on his legs, I daresay."

"And why shouldn't it be so? She can't live alone by herself always. Of course she never could have really loved Lord Ongar."

"Never, I should think," said Harry.

"And Archie is good-natured, and good-tempered, and—and—and—good-looking. Don't you think so? I think it would just do for her. She'd have her own way, for he's not a bit like Hugh, you know. He's not so clever as Hugh, but he is much more good-natured. Don't you think it would be a good arrangement, Harry?" Then again she looked up into his face anxiously.

Nothing in the whole matter surprised him more than her eagerness in advocating the proposal. Why should she desire that her sister should be sacrificed in this way? But in so thinking of it he forgot her own position, and the need that there was to her for some friend to be near to her,—for some comfort and assistance. She had spoken truly in saying that the plan had originated with her husband; but since it had been suggested to her, she had not ceased to think of it, and to wish for it.

"Well, Harry, what do you say?" she asked.

"I don't see that I have anything to say."

"But I know you can help us. When I was with her the last time she declared that you were the only one of us she ever wished to see again. She meant to include me then especially, but of course she was not thinking of Archie. I know you can help us if you will."

"Am I to ask her to marry him?"

"Not exactly that; I don't think that would do any good. But you might persuade her to come here. I think she would come if you advised her; and then, after a bit, you might say a good word for Archie."

"Upon my word I could not."

"Why not, Harry?"

"Because I know he would not make her happy. What good would such a marriage do her?"

"Think of her position. No one will visit her unless she is first received here, or at any rate unless she comes to us in town. And then it would be up-hill work. Do you know Lord Ongar had absolutely determined at one time to—to get a divorce?"

"And do you believe that she was guilty?"

"I don't say that. No; why should I believe anything against my own sister when nothing is proved. But that makes no difference, if the world believes it. They say now that if he had lived three months longer she never would have got the money."

"Then they say lies. Who is it says so? A parcel of old women who delight in having some one to run down and backbite. It is all false, Lady Clavering."

"But what does it signify, Harry? There she is, and you know how people are talking. Of course it would be best for her to marry again; and if she would take Archie,—Sir Hugh's brother, my brother-in-law,

nothing further would be said. She might go anywhere then. As her sister, I feel sure that it is the best thing she could do."

Harry's brow became clouded, and there was a look of anger on his face as he answered her.

"Lady Clavering," he said, "your sister will never marry my cousin Archie. I look upon the thing as impossible."

"Perhaps it is, Harry, that you,—you yourself would not wish it."

"Why should I wish it?"

"He is your own cousin."

"Cousin indeed! Why should I wish it, or why should I not wish it? They are neither of them anything to me."

"She ought not to be anything to you."

"And she is nothing. She may marry Archie, if she pleases, for me. I shall not set her against him. But, Lady Clavering, you might as well tell him to get one of the stars. I don't think you can know your sister when you suppose such a match to be possible."

"Hermione!" shouted Sir Hugh,—and the shout was uttered in a voice that always caused Lady Clavering to tremble.

"I am coming," she said, rising from her chair. "Don't set yourself against it, Harry," and then, without waiting to hear him further, she obeyed her husband's summons. "What the mischief keeps you in there?" he said. It seemed that things had not been going well in the larger room. The rector had stuck to his review, taking no notice of Sir Hugh when he entered. "You seem to be very fond of your book, all of a sudden," Sir Hugh had said, after standing silent on the rug for a few minutes.

"Yes, I am," said the rector,—"just at present."

"It's quite new with you, then," said Sir Hugh, "or else you're very much belied."

"Hugh," said Mr. Clavering, rising slowly from his chair, "I don't often come into my father's house, but when I do, I wish to be treated with respect. You are the only person in this parish that ever omits to do so."

"Bosh!" said Sir Hugh.

The two girls sat cowering in their seats, and poor Florence must have begun to entertain an uncomfortable idea of her future connexions. Archie made a frantic attempt to raise some conversation with Mrs. Clavering about the weather. Mrs. Clavering, paying no attention to Archie whatever, looked at her husband with beseeching eyes. "Henry," she said, "do not allow yourself to be angry; pray do not. What is the use?"

"None on earth," he said, returning to his book. "No use on earth;—and worse than none in showing it."

Then it was that Sir Hugh had made a diversion by calling to his wife. "I wish you'd stay with us, and not go off alone with one person in particular, in that way." Lady Clavering looked round and immediately saw that things were unpleasant. "Archie," she said, "will you ring for tea?" And Archie did ring. The tea was brought, and a cup was taken all round, almost in silence.

Harry in the meantime remained by himself thinking of what he had heard from Lady Clavering. Archie Clavering marry Lady Ongar,—marry his Julia! It was impossible. He could not bring himself even to think of such an arrangement with equanimity. He was almost frantic with anger as he thought of this proposition to restore Lady Ongar to the position in the world's repute which she had a right to claim, by such a marriage as that. "She would indeed be disgraced then," said Harry to himself. But he knew that it was impossible. He could see what would be the nature of Julia's countenance if Archie should ever get near enough to her to make his proposal! Archie indeed! There was no one for whom, at that moment, he entertained so thorough a contempt as he did for his cousin, Archie Clavering.

Let us hope that he was no dog in the manger;—that the feelings which he now entertained for poor Archie would not have been roused against any other possible suitor who might have been named as a fitting husband for Lady Ongar. Lady Ongar could be nothing to him!

But I fear that he was a dog in the manger, and that any marriage contemplated for Lady Ongar, either by herself or by others for her, would have been distasteful to him,—unnaturally distasteful. He knew that Lady Ongar could be nothing to him; and yet, as he came out of the small room into the larger room, there was something sore about his heart, and the soreness was occasioned by the thought that any second marriage should be thought possible for Lady Ongar. Florence smiled on him as he went up to her, but I doubt whether she would have smiled had she known all his heart.

Soon after that Mrs. Clavering rose to return home, having swallowed a peace-offering in the shape of a cup of tea. But though the tea had quieted the storm then on the waters, there was no true peace in the rector's breast. He shook hands cordially with Lady Clavering, without animosity with Archie, and then held out three fingers to the baronet. The baronet held out one finger. Each nodded at the other, and so they parted. Harry, who knew nothing of what had happened, and who was still thinking of Lady Ongar, busied himself with Florence, and they were soon out of the house, walking down the broad road from the front door.

"I will never enter that house again, when I know that Hugh Clavering is in it," said the rector.

"Don't make rash assertions, Henry," said his wife.

"I hope it is not rash, but I make that assertion," he said. "I will never again enter that house as my nephew's guest. I have borne a great deal for the sake of peace, but there are things which a man cannot bear."

Then, as they walked home, the two girls explained to Harry what had occurred in the larger room, while he was talking to Lady Clavering in the smaller one. But he said nothing to them of the subject of that conversation.

CHAPTER XII.

LADY ONGAR TAKES POSSESSION.

I do not know that there is in England a more complete gentleman's residence than Ongar Park, nor could there be one in better repair, or more fit for immediate habitation than was that house when it came into the hands of the young widow. The park was not large, containing about sixty or seventy acres. But there was a home-farm attached to the place, which also now belonged to Lady Ongar for her life, and which gave to the park itself an appearance of extent which it would otherwise have wanted. The house, regarded as a nobleman's mansion, was moderate in size, but it was ample for the requirements of any ordinarily wealthy family. The dining-room, library, drawing-rooms, and breakfast-room, were all large and well-arranged. The hall was handsome and spacious, and the bed-rooms were sufficiently numerous to make an auctioneer's mouth water. But the great charm of Ongar Park lay in the grounds immediately round the house, which sloped down from the terrace before the windows to a fast-running stream which was almost hidden,—but was not hidden,—by the shrubs on its bank. Though the domain itself was small, the shrubberies and walks were extensive. It was a place costly to maintain in its present perfect condition, but when that was said against it, all was said against it which its bitterest enemies could allege.

But Lady Ongar, with her large jointure, and with no external expenses whatever, could afford this delight without imprudence. Everything in and about the place was her own, and she might live there happily, even in the face of the world's frowns, if she could teach herself to find happiness in rural luxuries. On her immediate return to England, her lawyer had told her that he found there would be opposition to her claim, and that an attempt would be made to keep the house out of her hands. Lord Ongar's people would, he said, bribe her to submit to this by immediate acquiescence as to her income. But she had declared that she would not submit,—that she would have house and income and all; and she had been successful. "Why should I surrender what is my own?" she had said, looking the lawyer full in the face. The lawyer had not dared to tell her that her opponents,—Lord Ongar's heirs,—had calculated on her anxiety to avoid exposure; but she knew that that was meant. "I have nothing to fear from them," she said, "and mean to claim what is my own by my settlement." There had, in truth, been no ground for disputing her right, and the place was given up to her before she had been three months in England. She at once went down and took possession, and there she was, alone, when her sister was communicating to Harry Clavering her plan about Captain Archie.

She had never seen the place till she reached it on this occasion; nor had she ever seen, nor would she now probably ever see, Lord Ongar's larger house, Courton Castle. She had gone abroad with him immediately

on their marriage, and now she had returned a widow to take possession of his house. There she was in possession of it all. The furniture in the rooms, the books in the cases, the gilded clocks and grand mirrors about the house, all the implements of wealthy care about the gardens, the corn in the granaries and the ricks in the hay-yard, the horses in the stable, and the cows lowing in the fields,—they were all hers. She had performed her part of the bargain, and now the price was paid to her into her hands. When she arrived she did not know what was the extent of her riches in this world's goods; nor, in truth, had she at once the courage to ask questions on the subject. She saw cows, and was told of horses; and words came to her gradually of sheep and oxen, of poultry, pigs, and growing calves. It was as though a new world had opened itself before her eyes, full of interest, and as though all that world were her own. She looked at it, and knew that it was the price of her bargain. Upon the whole she had been very lucky. She had, indeed, passed through a sharp agony,—an agony sharp almost to death; but the agony had been short, and the price was in her hand.

A close carriage had met her at the station, and taken her with her maid to the house. She had so arranged that she had reached the station after dark, and even then had felt that the eyes of many were upon her as she went out to her carriage, with her face covered by a veil. She was all alone, and there would be no one at the house to whom she could speak;—but the knowledge that the carriage was her own perhaps consoled her. The housekeeper who received her was a stout, elderly, comfortable body, to whom she could perhaps say a few words beyond those which might be spoken to an ordinary servant; but she fancied at once that the housekeeper was cold to her, and solemn in her demeanour. "I hope you have good fires, Mrs. Button." "Yes, my lady." "I think I will have some tea; I don't want anything else to-night." "Very well, my lady." Mrs. Button, maintaining a solemn countenance, would not go beyond this; and yet Mrs. Button looked like a woman who could have enjoyed a gossip, had the lady been a lady to her mind. Perhaps Mrs. Button did not like serving a lady as to whom such sad stories were told. Lady Ongar, as she thought of this, drew herself up unconsciously, and sent Mrs. Button away from her.

The next morning, after an early breakfast, Lady Ongar went out. She was determined that she would work hard; that she would understand the farm; that she would know the labourers; that she would assist the poor; that she would have a school; and, above all, that she would make all the privileges of ownership her own. Was not the price in her hand, and would she not use it? She felt that it was very good that something of the price had come to her thus in the shape of land, and beeves, and wide, heavy outside garniture. From them she would pluck an interest which mere money could not have given her. She was so early, therefore, that she might look round upon the things that were her own.

And there came upon her a feeling that she would not empty this sweet cup at one draught, that she would dally somewhat with the rich banquet that was spread for her. She had many griefs to overcome, much sorrow to conquer, perhaps a long period of desolation to assuage, and she would not be prodigal of her resources. As she looked around her while she walked, almost furtively, lest some gardener as he spied her might guess her thoughts and tell how my lady was revelling in her pride of possession,—it appeared to her that those novelties in which she was to find her new interest were without end. There was not a tree there, not a shrub, not a turn in the walks, which should not become her friend. She did not go far from the house, not even down to the water. She was husbanding her resources. But yet she lost herself amidst the paths, and tried to find a joy in feeling that she had done so. It was all her own. It was the price of what she had done; and the price was even now being paid into her hand,—paid with current coin and of full weight.

As she sat down alone to her breakfast, she declared to herself that this should be enough for her,—that it should satisfy her. She had made her bargain with her eyes open, and would not now ask for things which had not been stipulated in the contract. She was alone, and all the world was turning its back on her. The relatives of her late husband would, as a matter of course, be her enemies. Them she had never seen, and that they should speak evil of her seemed to be only natural. But her own relatives were removed from her by a gulf nearly equally wide. Of Brabazon cousins she had none nearer than the third or fourth degree of cousinship, and of them she had never taken heed, and expected no heed from them. Her set of friends would naturally have been the same as her sister's, and would have been made up of those she had known when she was one of Sir Hugh's family. But from Sir Hugh she was divided now as widely as from the Ongar people, and,—for any purposes of society,—from her sister also. Sir Hugh had allowed his wife to invite her to Clavering, but to this she would not submit after Sir Hugh's treatment to her on her return. Though she had suffered much, her spirit was unbroken. Sir Hugh was, in truth, responsible for her reception in England. Had he come forward like a brother, all might have been well. But it was too late now for Sir Hugh Clavering to remedy the evil he had done, and he should be made to understand that Lady Ongar would not become a suppliant to him for mercy. She was striving to think how "rich she was in horses, how rich in brodered garments and in gold," as she sat solitary over her breakfast; but her mind would run off to other things, compassing itself with unnecessary miseries and useless indignation. Had she got her price in her hand?

Would she see the steward that morning? No,—not that morning. Things outside could go on for a while in their course as heretofore. She feared to seem to take possession with pride, and then there was that conviction that it would be well to husband her resources. So she sent for Mrs. Button, and asked Mrs. Button to walk through the rooms with

her. Mrs. Button came, but again declined to accept her lady's condescension. Every spot about the house, every room, closet, and wardrobe, she was ready to open with zeal; the furniture she was prepared to describe, if Lady Ongar would listen to her; but every word was spoken in a solemn voice, very far removed from gossiping. Only once was Mrs. Button moved to betray any emotion. "That, my lady, was my lord's mother's room, after my lord died,—my lord's father that was; may God bless her." Then Lady Ongar reflected that from her husband she had never heard a word either of his father or his mother. She wished that she could seat herself with that woman in some small upstairs room, and then ask question after question about the family. But she did not dare to make the attempt. She could not bring herself to explain to Mrs. Button that she had never known anything of the belongings of her own husband.

When she had seen the upper part of the house, Mrs. Button offered to convoy her through the kitchens and servants' apartments, but she declined this for the present. She had done enough for the day. So she dismissed Mrs. Button, and took herself to the library. How often had she heard that books afforded the surest consolation to the desolate. She would take to reading; not on this special day, but as the resource for many days and months, and years to come. But this idea had faded and become faint, before she had left the gloomy, damp-feeling, chill room, in which some former Lord Ongar had stored the musty volumes which he had thought fit to purchase. The library gave her no ease, so she went out again among the lawns and shrubs. For some time to come her best resources must be those which she could find outside the house.

Peering about, she made her way behind the stables, which were attached to the house, to a farmyard gate, through which the way led to the head-quarters of the live-stock. She did not go through, but she looked over the gate, telling herself that those barns and sheds, that wealth of straw-yard, those sleeping pigs and idle dreaming calves, were all her own. As she did so, her eye fell upon an old labourer, who was sitting close to her, on a felled tree, under the shelter of a paling, eating his dinner. A little girl, some six years old, who had brought him his meal tied up in a handkerchief, was crouching near his feet. They had both seen her before she had seen them, and when she noticed them, were staring at her with all their eyes. She and they were on the same side of the farmyard paling, and so she could reach them and speak to them without difficulty. There was apparently no other person near enough to listen, and it occurred to her that she might at any rate make a friend of this old man. His name, he said, was Enoch Gubby, and the girl was his grandchild. Her name was Patty Gubby. Then Patty got up and had her head patted by her ladyship and received sixpence. They neither of them, however, knew who her ladyship was, and, as far as Lady Ongar could ascertain without a question too direct to be asked, had never heard of her. Enoch Gubby said he worked for Mr. Giles, the steward,—that was

for my lord, and as he was old and stiff with rheumatism he only got eight shillings a week. He had a daughter, the mother of Patty, who worked in the fields, and got six shillings a week. Everything about the poor Gubbys seemed to be very wretched and miserable. Sometimes he could hardly drag himself about, he was so bad with the rheumatics. Then she thought that she would make one person happy, and told him that his wages should be raised to ten shillings a week. No matter whether he earned it or not, or what Mr. Giles might say, he should have ten shillings a week. Enoch Gubby bowed, and rubbed his head, and stared, and was in truth thankful because of the sixpence in ready money; but he believed nothing about the ten shillings. He did not especially disbelieve, but simply felt confident that he understood nothing that was said to him. That kindness was intended, and that the sixpence was there, he did understand.

But Enoch Gubby got his weekly ten shillings, though Lady Ongar hardly realized the pleasure that she had expected from the transaction. She sent that afternoon for Mr. Giles, the steward, and told him what she had done. Mr. Giles did not at all approve, and spoke his disapproval very plainly, though he garnished his rebuke with a great many "my lady's." The old man was a hanger-on about the place, and for years had received eight shillings a week, which he had not half earned. "Now he will have ten, that is all," said Lady Ongar. Mr. Giles acknowledged that if her ladyship pleased, Enoch Gubby must have the ten shillings, but declared that the business could not be carried on in that way. Everybody about the place would expect an addition, and those people who did earn what they received, would think themselves cruelly used in being worse treated than Enoch Gubby, who, according to Mr. Giles, was by no means the most worthy old man in the parish. And as for his daughter—oh! Mr. Giles could not trust himself to talk about the daughter to her ladyship. Before he left her, Lady Ongar was convinced that she had made a mistake. Not even from charity will pleasure come, if charity be taken up simply to appease remorse.

The price was in her hand. For a fortnight the idea clung to her, that gradually she would realize the joys of possession; but there was no moment in which she could tell herself that the joy was hers. She was now mistress of the geography of the place. There was no more losing herself amidst the shrubberies, no thought of economizing her resources. Of Mr. Giles and his doings she still knew very little, but the desire of knowing much had faded. The ownership of the haystacks had become a thing tame to her, and the great cart-horses, as to every one of which she had intended to feel an interest, were matters of indifference to her. She observed that since her arrival a new name in new paint,—her own name,—was attached to the carts, and that the letters were big and glaring. She wished that this had not been done, or, at any rate, that the letters had been smaller. Then she began to think that it might be well for her to let the farm to a tenant; not that she might thus get more money, but because she felt

that the farm would be a trouble. The apples had indeed quickly turned to ashes between her teeth !

On the first Sunday that she was at Ongar Park she went to the parish church. She had resolved strongly that she would do this, and she did it ; but when the moment for starting came, her courage almost failed her. The church was but a few yards from her own gate, and she walked there without any attendant. She had, however, sent word to the sexton to say that she would be there, and the old man was ready to show her into the family pew. She wore a thick veil, and was dressed, of course, in all the deep ceremonious woe of widowhood. As she walked up the centre of the church she thought of her dress, and told herself that all there would know how it had been between her and her husband. She was pretending to mourn for the man to whom she had sold herself ; for the man who through happy chance had died so quickly, leaving her with the price in her hand ! All of course knew that, and all thought that they knew, moreover, that she had been foully false to her bargain, and had not earned the price ! That, also, she told herself. But she went through it, and walked out of the church among the village crowd with her head on high.

Three days afterwards she wrote to the clergyman, asking him to call on her. She had come, she said, to live in the parish, and hoped to be able, with his assistance, to be of some use among the people. She would hardly know how to act without some counsel from him. The schools might be all that was excellent, but if there was anything required she hoped he would tell her. On the following morning the clergyman called, and, with many thanks for her generosity, listened to her plans, and accepted her subsidies. But he was a married man, and he said nothing of his wife, nor during the next week did his wife come to call on her. She was to be left desolate by all, because men had told lies of her !

She had the price in her hands, but she felt herself tempted to do as Judas did,—to go out and hang herself.

The Study of Celtic Literature.

PART III.

WE have seen how philology carries us towards ideas of affinity of race which are new to us. But it is evident that this affinity, even if proved, can be no very potent affair, unless it goes beyond the stage at which we have hitherto observed it. Affinity between races still, so to speak, in their mother's womb, counts for something, indeed, but cannot count for very much. So long as Celt and Teuton are in their embryo rudimentary state, or, at least, no such great while out of their cradle, still engaged in their wanderings, changes of place and struggle for development, so long as they have not yet crystallized into solid nations, they may touch and mix in passing, and yet very little come of it. It is when the embryo has grown and solidified into a distinct nation, into the Gaul or German of history, when it has finally acquired the characters which make the Gaul of history what he is, the German of history what he is, that contact and mixture are important, and may leave a long train of effects; for Celt and Teuton by this time have their formed, marked, national, ineffaceable qualities to oppose or to communicate. The contact of the German of the Continent with the Celt was in the pre-historic times, and the definite German type, as we know it, was fixed later, and from the time when it became fixed was not influenced by the Celtic type. But here in our country, in historic times, long after the Celtic embryo had crystallized into the Celt proper, long after the Germanic embryo had crystallized into the German proper, there was an important contact between the two peoples; the Saxons invaded the Britons and settled themselves in the Britons' country. Well, then, here was a contact which one might expect would leave its traces; if the Saxons got the upper hand, as we all know they did, and made our country be England and us be English, there must yet, one would think, be some trace of the Saxon having met the Briton; there must be some Celtic vein or other running through us. Many people say there is nothing at all of the kind, absolutely nothing; the *Saturday Review* treats these matters of ethnology with great power and learning, and the *Saturday Review* says we are "a nation into which a Norman element, like a much smaller Celtic element, was so completely absorbed that it is vain to seek after Norman or Celtic elements in any modern Englishman." And the other day at Zurich I read a long essay on English literature by one of the professors there, in which the writer observed, as a remarkable thing, that while other countries conquered by the Germans,—France, for instance, and Italy,—had ousted all German influence from their genius and literature, there were two countries, not

originally Germanic, but conquered by the Germans, England and German Switzerland, of which the genius and the literature were purely and unmingledly German; and this he laid down as a position which nobody would dream of challenging.

I say it is strange that this should be so, and we in particular have reason for inquiring whether it really is so; because though, as I have said, even as a matter of science the Celt has a claim to be known, and we have an interest in knowing him, yet this interest is wonderfully enhanced if we find him to have actually a part in us. The question is to be tried by external and by internal evidence; the language and the physical type of our race afford certain data for trying it, and other data are afforded by our literature, genius, and spiritual production generally. Data of this second kind belong to the province of the literary critic; data of the first kind to the province of the philologist and of the physiologist.

The province of the philologist and of the physiologist is not mine; but this whole question as to the mixture of Celt with Saxon in us has been so little explored, people have been so prone to settle it off-hand according to their prepossessions, that even on the philological and physiological side of it I must say a few words in passing. Surely it must strike with surprise any one who thinks of it, to find that without any immense inpouring of a whole people, that by mere expeditions of invaders having to come over the sea and in no greater numbers than the Saxons, so far as we can make out, actually came, the old occupants of this island, the Celtic Britons, should have been completely annihilated, or even so completely absorbed that it is vain to seek after Celtic elements in the existing English race. Of deliberate wholesale extermination of the Celtic race, all of them who could not fly to Wales or Scotland, we hear nothing; and without some such extermination one would suppose that a great mass of them must have remained in the country, their lot the obscure and, so to speak, underground lot of a subject race, but yet insensibly getting mixed with their conquerors, and their blood entering into the composition of a new people, in which the stock of the conquerors counts for most, but the stock of the conquered, too, counts for something. How little the triumph of the conquerors' laws, manners, and language, proves the extinction of the old race, we may see by looking at France; Gaul was Latinized in language, manners, and laws, and yet her people remained essentially Celtic. The Germanization of Britain went far deeper than the Latinization of France, and not only laws, manners, and language, but the main current of the blood, became Germanic; but how, without some process of radical extirpation, of which, as I say, there is no evidence, can there have failed to subsist in Britain, as in Gaul, a Celtic current too? The indications of this in our language have never yet been thoroughly searched out; the Celtic names of places prove nothing, of course, as to the point here in question; they come from the pre-historic times, the times before the nations, Germanic or Celtic, had crystallized, and they are everywhere, as the impetuous Celt was formerly everywhere,—

in the Alps, the Apennines, the Cevennes, the Rhine, the Po, as well as in the Thames, the Humber, Cumberland, London. But it is said that words of Celtic origin for things having to do with every-day peaceful life,—the life of a settled nation,—words like *basket* (to take an instance which all the world knows) form a much larger body in our language than is commonly supposed; it is said that a number of our raciest, most idiomatic, popular words—for example, *bam*, *kick*, *whop*, *twaddle*, *fudge*, *hitch*, *muggy*,—are Celtic. These assertions require to be carefully examined, and it by no means follows that because an English word is found in Celtic, therefore we get it from thence; but they have not yet had the attention which, as illustrating through language this matter of the subsistence and intermingling in our nation of a Celtic part, they merit.

Nor have the physiological data which illustrate this matter had much more attention from us in England. But in France, a physician, half English by blood, though a Frenchman by home and language, Monsieur W. F. Edwards, brother to Monsieur Milne-Edwards, the well-known zoologist, published in 1839 a letter to Monsieur Amedée Thierry with this title: *Des Caractères Physiologiques des Races Humaines considérés dans leurs Rapports avec l'Histoire*. The letter attracted great attention on the Continent; it fills not much more than a hundred pages, and they are a hundred pages which well deserve reading and re-reading. Monsieur Thierry in his *Histoire des Gaulois* had divided the population of Gaul into certain groups, and the object of Monsieur Edwards was to try this division by physiology. Groups of men have, he says, their physical type which distinguishes them, as well as their language; the traces of this physical type endure as the traces of language endure, and physiology is enabled to verify history by them. Accordingly, he determines the physical type of each of the two great Celtic families, the Gaels and the Cymris, who are said to have been distributed in a certain order through Gaul, and then he tracks these types in the population of France at the present day, and so verifies the alleged original order of distribution. In doing this, he makes excursions into neighbouring countries where the Gaels and the Cymris have been, and he declares that in England he finds abundant traces of the physical type which he has established as the Cymric, still subsisting in our population, and having descended from the old British possessors of our soil before the Saxon conquest. But if we are to believe the current English opinion, says Monsieur Edwards, the stock of these old British possessors is clean gone. On this opinion he makes the following comment:—

“In the territory occupied by the Saxons, the Britons were no longer an independent nation, nor even a people with any civil existence at all. For history, therefore, they were dead, above all for history as it was then written; but they had not perished; they still lived on, and undoubtedly in such numbers as the remains of a great nation, in spite of its disasters, might still be expected to keep. That the Britons were destroyed or expelled from England, properly so called, is, as I have said, a popular opinion

in that country. It is founded on the exaggeration of the writers of history ; but in these very writers, when we come to look closely at what they say, we find the confession that the remains of this people were reduced to a state of strict servitude. Attached to the soil, they will have shared in that emancipation which during the course of the middle ages gradually restored to political life the mass of the population in the countries of Western Europe ; recovering by slow degrees their rights without resuming their name, and rising gradually with the rise of industry, they will have got spread through all ranks of society. The gradualness of this movement, and the obscurity which enwrapped its beginnings, allowed the contempt of the conqueror and the shame of the conquered to become fixed feelings ; and so it turns out, that an Englishman who now thinks himself sprung from the Saxons or the Normans, is often in reality the descendant of the Britons."

So physiology, as well as language, incomplete though the application of their tests to this matter has hitherto been, may lead us to hesitate before accepting the round assertion that it is vain to search for Celtic elements in any modern Englishman. But it is not only by the tests of physiology and language that we can try this matter. As there are for physiology physical marks, such as the square head of the German, the round head of the Gael, the oval head of the Cymri, which determine the type of a people, so for criticism there are spiritual marks which determine the type, and make us speak of the Greek genius, the Teutonic genius, the Celtic genius, and so on. Here is another test at our service ; and this test, too, has never yet been thoroughly employed. Foreign critics have indeed occasionally hazarded the idea that in English poetry there is a Celtic element traceable ; and Mr. Morley, in his very readable as well as very useful book on the English writers before Chaucer, has a sentence which struck my attention when I read it, because it expresses an opinion which I, too, have long held. Mr. Morley says :—" The main current of English literature cannot be disconnected from the lively Celtic wit in which it has one of its sources. The Celts do not form an utterly distinct part of our mixed population. But for early, frequent, and various contact with the race that in its half-barbarous days invented Ossian's dialogues with St. Patrick, and that quickened afterwards the Northmen's blood in France, Germanic England would not have produced a Shakspeare." But there Mr. Morley leaves the matter. He indicates this Celtic element and influence, but he does not show us,—it did not come within the scope of his work to show us,—how this influence has declared itself. Unlike the physiological test, or the linguistic test, this literary, spiritual test is one which I may perhaps be allowed to try my hand at applying. I say that there is a Celtic element in the English nature, as well as a Germanic element, and that this element manifests itself in our spirit and literature. But before I try to point out how it manifests itself, it may be as well to get a clear notion of what we mean by a Celtic element, a Germanic element ; what characters, that is, deter-

mine for us the Celtic genius, the Germanic genius, as we commonly conceive the two.

Let me repeat what I have often said of the characteristics which mark the English spirit, the English genius. This spirit, this genius, judged, to be sure, rather from a friend's than an enemy's point of view, yet judged on the whole fairly, is characterized, I have repeatedly said, by *energy with honesty*. Take away some of the energy which comes to us, as I believe, in part from Celtic and Roman sources; instead of energy, say rather *steadiness*; and you have the Germanic genius: *steadiness with honesty*. It is evident how nearly the two characterizations approach one another; and yet they leave, as we shall see, a great deal of room for difference. Steadiness with honesty; the danger for a national spirit thus composed is the humdrum, the plain and ugly, the ignoble: in a word, *das Gemeine, die Gemeinheit*, that curse of Germany, against which Goethe was all his life fighting. The excellence of a national spirit thus composed is freedom from whim, flightiness, perverseness; patient fidelity to Nature,—in a word, *science*,—leading it at last, though slowly, and not by the most brilliant road, out of the bondage of the humdrum and common, into the better life. The universal dead-level of plainness and homeliness, the lack of all beauty and distinction in form and feature, the slowness and clumsiness of the language, the eternal beer, sausages, and bad tobacco, the blank commonness everywhere, pressing at last like a weight on the spirits of the traveller in Northern Germany, and making him impatient to be gone—this is the weak side; the industry, the well-doing, the patient steady elaboration of things, the idea of science governing all departments of human activity—this is the strong side; and through this side of her genius, Germany has already obtained excellent results, and is destined, we may depend upon it, however her pedantry, her slowness, her fumbling, her ineffectiveness, her bad government, may at times make us cry out, to an immense development.

For dulness, the creeping Saxons—says an old Irish poem, assigning the characteristics for which different nations are celebrated:—

For acuteness and valour, the Greeks,
For excessive pride, the Romans,
For dulness, the creeping Saxons;
For beauty and amorousness, the Gaedhils.

We have seen in what sense, and with what explanation, this characterization of the German may be allowed to stand; now let us come to the beautiful and amorous Gaedhil. Or rather, let us find a definition which may suit both branches of the Celtic family, the Cymri as well as the Gael. It is clear that special circumstances may have developed some one side in the national character of Cymri or Gael, Welshman or Irishman, so that the observer's notice shall be readily caught by this side, and yet it may be impossible to adopt it as characteristic of the Celtic nature generally. For instance, in his beautiful essay on the poetry of the Celtic races, M. Renan, with his eyes fixed on the Bretons and the Welsh, is struck

with the timidity, the shyness, the delicacy of the Celtic nature, its preference for a retired life, its embarrassment at having to deal with the great world. He talks of his *douce petite race naturellement chrétienne*, his *race fière et timide, à l'extérieur gauche et embarrassée*. But it is evident that this description, however well it may do for the Cymri, will never do for the Gael, never do for the typical Irishman of Donnybrook fair. Again, M. Renan's *infinie délicatesse de sentiment qui caractérise la race Celtique*, how little that accords with the popular conception of an Irishman who wants to borrow money ! *Sentiment* is, however, the word which marks where the Celtic races really touch and are one ; sentimental, if the Celtic nature is to be characterized by a single term, is the best term to take. An organization quick to feel impressions, and feeling them very strongly ; a lively personality therefore, keenly sensitive to joy and to sorrow ; this is the main point. If the downs of life too much outnumber the ups, this temperament, just because it is so quickly and nearly conscious of all impressions, may no doubt be seen shy and wounded ; it may be seen in wistful regret, it may be seen in passionate, penetrating melancholy ; but its essence is to aspire ardently after life, light, and emotion, to be expansive, adventurous, and gay. Our word *gay*, it is said, is itself Celtic. It is not from *gaudium*, but from the Celtic *gair*, to laugh ; and the impressionable Celt, soon up and soon down, is the more down because it is so his nature to be up—to be sociable, hospitable, eloquent, admired, figuring away brilliantly. He loves bright colours, he easily becomes audacious, over-crowding, full of fanfaronade. The German, say the physiologists, has the larger volume of intestines (and who that has ever seen a German at a table-d'hôte will not readily believe this ?), the Frenchman has the more developed organs of respiration. That is just the expansive, eager Celtic nature ; the head in the air, snuffing and snorting ; *a proud look and a high stomach*, as the Psalmist says, but without any such settled savage temper as the Psalmist seems to impute by those words. For good and for bad, the Celtic genius is more airy and unsubstantial, goes less near the ground, than the German. The Celt is often called sensual ; but it is not so much the vulgar satisfactions of sense that attract him as emotion and excitement ; he is truly, as I began by saying, sentimental.

Sentimental—*always ready to react against the despotism of fact* : that is the description a great friend of the Celt gives of him ; and it is not a bad description of the sentimental temperament, it lets us into the secret of its dangers and of its habitual want of success. Balance, measure, and patience, these are the eternal conditions, even supposing the happiest temperament to start with, of high success ; and balance, measure, and patience are just what the Celt has never had. Even in the world of spiritual creation, he has never, in spite of his admirable gifts of quick perception and warm emotion, succeeded perfectly, because he never has had steadiness, patience, sanity enough to comply with the conditions under which alone can expression be perfectly given to the finest perceptions and emotions. The Greek has the same perceptive, emotional tem-

perament as the Celt; but he adds to this temperament the sense of *measure*; hence his admirable success in the plastic arts, in which the Celtic genius, with its chafing against the despotism of fact, its perpetual straining after mere emotion, has accomplished nothing. In the comparatively petty art of ornamentation, in rings, brooches, croziers, relic-cases, and so on, he has done just enough to show his delicacy of taste, his happy temperament; but the grand difficulties of painting and sculpture, the prolonged dealings of spirit with matter, he has never had patience for. Take the more spiritual arts of music and poetry. All that emotion alone can do in music the Celt has done; the very soul of emotion breathes in the Scotch and Irish airs; but with all this power of musical feeling, what has the Celt, so eager for emotion that he has not patience for science, effected in music, to be compared with what the less emotional German, steadily developing his musical feeling with the science of a Sebastian Bach or a Beethoven, has effected? In poetry, again, poetry which the Celt has so passionately, so nobly loved; poetry where emotion counts for so much, but where reason too, reason, measure, sanity, also count for so much, the Celt has shown genius, indeed, splendid genius; but even here his faults have clung to him, and hindered him from producing great works, such as other nations with a genius for poetry—the Greeks, say, or the Italians—have produced. The Celt has not produced great poetical works, he has only produced poetry with an air of greatness investing it all, and sometimes giving, moreover, to short pieces, or to passages, lines, and snatches of long pieces, singular beauty and power. And yet he loved poetry so much that he grudged no pains to it; but the true art, the *architectonicé* which shapes great works such as the *Agamemnon* or the *Divine Comedy*, comes only after a steady, deep-searching survey, a firm conception of the facts of human life, which the Celt has not patience for. So he runs off into technic, where he employs the utmost elaboration, and attains astonishing skill; but in the contents of his poetry you have only so much interpretation of the world as the first dash of a quick, strong perception, and then sentiment, infinite sentiment, can bring you. Here, too, his want of sanity and steadfastness has kept the Celt back from the highest success.

If his rebellion against fact has thus lamed the Celt even in spiritual work, how much more must it have lamed him in the world of business and politics? The skilful and resolute appliance of means to ends which is needed both to make progress in material civilization, and also to form powerful states, is just what the Celt has least turn for. He is sensual, as I have said, or at least sensuous; loves bright colours, company, and pleasure; and here he is like the Greek and Latin races; but compare the talent the Greek and Latin (or Latinized) races have shown for gratifying their senses, for procuring an outward life rich, luxurious, splendid, with the Celt's failure to reach any material civilization sound and satisfying, and not out at elbows, poor, slovenly, and half-barbarous. The sensuousness of the Greek made Sybaris and Corinth, the sensuousness

of the Latin made Rome and Baix, the sensuousness of the Latinized Frenchman makes Paris ; the sensuousness of the Celt proper has made Ireland. Even in his ideal heroic times, his gay and sensuous nature cannot carry him, in the appliances of his favourite life of sociability and pleasure, beyond the gross and creeping Saxon whom he despises ; the regent Breas, we are told in the *Battle of Moytura of the Fomorians*, became unpopular because "the knives of his people were not greased at his table, nor did their breath smell of ale at the banquet." In its grossness and barbarousness is not that Saxon, as Saxon as it can be? just what the Latinized Norman, sensuous and sociable like the Celt, but with the talent to make this bent of his serve to a practical embellishment of his mode of living, found so disgusting in the Saxon.

And as in material civilization he has been ineffectual, so has the Celt been ineffectual in politics. This colossal, impetuous, adventurous wanderer, the Titan of the early world, who in primitive times fills so large a place on earth's scene, dwindles and dwindles as history goes on, and at last is shrunk to what we now see him. For ages and ages the world has been constantly slipping, ever more and more, out of the Celt's grasp. "They went forth to the war," Ossian says most truly, "*but they always fell.*"

And yet, if one sets about constituting an ideal genius, what a great deal of the Celt does one find oneself drawn to put into it! Of an ideal genius one does not want the elements, any of them, to be in a state of weakness ; on the contrary, one wants all of them to be in the highest state of power ; but with a law of measure, of harmony, presiding over the whole. So the sensibility of the Celt, if everything else were not sacrificed to it, is a beautiful and admirable force. For sensibility, the power of quick and strong perception and emotion, is one of the very prime constituents of genius, perhaps its most positive constituent ; it is to the soul what good senses are to the body, the grand natural condition of successful activity. Sensibility gives genius its materials ; one cannot have too much of it, if one can but keep its master and not be its slave. Do not let us wish that the Celt had had less sensibility, but that he had been more master of it. Even as it is, if his sensibility has been a source of weakness to him, it has been a source of power too, and a source of happiness. Some people have found in the Celtic nature and its sensibility the main root out of which chivalry and romance and the glorification of a feminine ideal spring ; this is a great question with which I cannot deal here. Let me notice in passing, however, that there is, in truth, a Celtic air about the extravagance of chivalry, its reaction against the despotism of fact, its straining human nature further than it will stand. But putting all this question of chivalry and its origin on one side, no doubt the sensibility of the Celtic nature, its nervous exaltation, have something feminine in them, and the Celt is thus peculiarly disposed to feel the spell of the feminine idiosyncrasy, he has an affinity to it, he is not far from its secret. Again, his sensibility gives him a peculiarly near and intimate feeling of nature and the

life of nature; here, too, he seems in a special way attracted by the secret before him, the secret of natural beauty and natural magic, and to be close to it, to half-divine it. In the productions of the Celtic genius, nothing, perhaps, is so interesting as the evidences of this power: I shall have occasion to give specimens of them by-and-by. The same sensibility made the Celts full of reverence and enthusiasm for genius, learning, and the things of the mind; *to be a bard, freed a man*—that is a characteristic stroke of this generous and ennobling ardour of theirs, which no race has ever shown more strongly. Even the extravagance and exaggeration of the sentimental Celtic nature has often something romantic and attractive about it, something which has a sort of smack of misdirected good. The Celt undisciplinable, anarchical, and turbulent by nature, but out of affection and admiration giving himself body and soul to some leader, that is not a promising political temperament, it is just the opposite of the Anglo-Saxon temperament, disciplinable and steadily obedient within certain limits, but retaining an inalienable part of freedom and self-dependence; but it is a temperament for which one has a kind of sympathy notwithstanding. And very often for the gay defiant reaction against fact of the lively Celtic nature one has more than sympathy; one feels, in spite of the extravagance, in spite of good sense disapproving, magnetized and exhilarated by it. The Gauls had a rule inflicting a fine on every warrior who, when he appeared on parade, was found to stick out too much in front—to be corpulent, in short. Such a rule is surely the maddest article of war ever framed, and to people to whom nature has assigned a large volume of intestines, must appear, no doubt, horrible; but yet has it not an audacious, sparkling, immaterial manner with it, which lifts one out of routine, and sets one's spirits in a glow?

All tendencies of human nature are in themselves, then, vital and profitable; when they are blamed, they are only to be blamed relatively, not absolutely. This holds true of the Saxon's phlegm as well as of the Celt's sentiment. Out of the steady humdrum habit of the creeping Saxon, as the Celt calls him,—out of his way of going near the ground,—has come, no doubt, Philistinism, that plant of essentially Germanic growth, flourishing with its genuine marks only in the German fatherland, Great Britain and her colonies, and the United States of America; but what a soul of goodness there is in Philistinism itself! and this soul of goodness I, who am often supposed to be Philistinism's mortal enemy merely because I do not wish it to have things all its own way, cherish as much as anybody. This steady-going habit leads at last, as I have said, up to science, up to the comprehension and interpretation of the world. With us in Great Britain, it is true, it does not seem to lead so far as that; it is in Germany, where the habit is more unmixed, that it can lead to science. Here with us it seems at a certain point to meet with a conflicting force, which checks it and prevents its pushing on to science; but before reaching this point what conquests has it not won! and all the more, perhaps, for stopping short at this point, for spending its exertions within a bounded field, the

field of plain sense, of direct practical utility. How it has augmented the comforts and conveniences of life for us! Doors that open, windows that shut, locks that turn, razors that shave, coats that wear, watches that go, and a thousand more such good things, are the invention of the Philistines.

Here, then, if commingling there is in our race, are two very unlike elements to commingle; the steady-going Saxon temperament and the sentimental Celtic temperament. But before we go on to try and verify, in our life and literature, the alleged fact of this commingling, we have yet another element to take into account, the Norman element. The critic in the *Saturday Review*, whom I have already quoted, says that in looking for traces of Normanism in our national genius, as in looking for traces of Celtism in it, we do but lose our labour; he says, indeed, that there went to the original making of our nation a very great deal more of a Norman element than of a Celtic element, but he asserts that both elements have now so completely disappeared, that it is vain to look for any trace of either of them in the modern Englishman. But this sort of assertion I do not like to admit without trying it a little. I want, therefore, to get some plain notion of the Norman habit and genius, as I have sought to get some plain notion of the Saxon and Celtic. Some people will say that the Normans are Teutonic, and that therefore the distinguishing characters of the German genius must be those of their genius also; but the matter cannot be settled in this speedy fashion. No doubt the basis of the Norman race is Teutonic; but the governing point in the history of the Norman race—so far, at least, as we English have to do with it—is not its Teutonic origin, but its Latin civilization. The French people have, as I have already remarked, an undoubtedly Celtic basis, yet so decisive in its effect upon a nation's habit and character can be the contact with a stronger civilization, that Gaul, without changing the basis of her blood, became, for all practical intents and purposes, a Latin country, France and not Ireland, through the Roman conquest. Latinism conquered Celtism in her, as it also conquered the Germanism imported by the Frankish and other invasions; Celtism is, however, I need not say, everywhere manifest still in the French nation; even Germanism is distinctly traceable in it as any one who attentively compares the French with other Latin races will see. No one can look carefully at the French troops in Rome, amongst the Italian population, and not perceive this trace of Germanism; I do not mean in the Alsatian soldiers only, but in the soldiers of genuine France. But the governing character of France, as a power in the world, is Latin; such was the force of Greek and Roman civilization upon a race whose whole mass remained Celtic, and where the Celtic language lingered on, they say, among the common people, for some five or six centuries after the Roman conquest. But the Normans in Neustria lost their old Teutonic language in a wonderfully short time; when they conquered England they were already Latinized; with them were a number of Frenchmen

by race, men from Anjou and Poitou, so they brought into England more non-Teutonic blood, besides what they had themselves got by intermarriage, than is commonly supposed; the great point, however, is, that by civilization this vigorous race,—when it took possession of England,—was Latin. These Normans, who in Neustria had lost their old Teutonic tongue so rapidly, kept in England their new Latin tongue for some three centuries. It is said to have been Edward the Third's reign before English came to be spoken at court. Why this difference? Both in Neustria and in England the Normans were a handful; but in Neustria, as Teutons, they were in contact with a more advanced civilization than their own; in England, as Latins, with a less advanced. The Latinized Normans in England had the sense for fact, which the Celts had not; and the love of strenuousness, clearness, and rapidity, the high Latin spirit, which the Saxons had not. They hated the slowness and dullness of the creeping Saxon; it offended their clear, strenuous talent for affairs, as it offended the Celt's quick and delicate perception. The Normans had the Roman talent for affairs, the Roman decisiveness in emergencies. They have been called prosaic, but this is not a right word for them; they were neither sentimental, nor, strictly speaking, poetical. They had more sense for rhetoric than for poetry, like the Romans; but, like the Romans, they had too high a spirit not to like a noble intellectual stimulus of some kind, and thus they were carried out of the region of the merely prosaic. Their foible—the bad excess of their characterizing quality of strenuousness—was not prosaic flatness, it was hardness and insolence.

I have been obliged to fetch a very wide circuit, but at last I have got what I went to seek. I have got a rough, but, I hope, clear notion of these three forces, the Germanic genius, the Celtic genius, the Norman genius. The Germanic genius has steadiness as its main basis, with commonness and humdrum for its defect, fidelity to nature for its excellence. The Celtic genius, sentiment as its main basis, with love of beauty, charm, and spirituality for its excellence, ineffectualness and self-will for its defect. The Norman genius, talent for affairs as its main basis, with strenuousness and clear rapidity for its excellence, hardness and insolence for its defect. And now to try and trace these in the composite English genius.

To begin with what is more external. If we are so wholly Anglo-Saxon and Germanic as people say, how comes it that the habits and gait of the German language are so exceedingly unlike ours? Why while *The Times* talks in this fashion:—"At noon a long line of carriages extended from Pall Mall to the Peers' entrance of the Palace of Westminster," does the *Cologne Gazette* talk in this other fashion:—"Nachdem die Vorbereitungen zu dem auf dem Gürzenich-Saale zu Ehren der Abgeordneten Statt finden sollenden Bankette bereits vollständig getroffen worden waren, fand heute vormittag auf polizeiliche Anordnung die Schliessung sämtlicher Zugänge zum Gürzenich Statt?" Surely the mental habit of people who express their thoughts in so very different a manner, the one rapid, the

other slow, the one plain, the other embarrassed, the one trailing, the other striding, cannot be essentially the same. The English language, strange compound as it is, with its want of inflexions, and with all the difficulties which this want of inflexions brings upon it, has yet made itself capable of being, in good hands, a business-instrument as ready, direct, and clear, as French or Latin. Again: perhaps no nation, after the Greeks and Romans, has so clearly felt in what true rhetoric, rhetoric of the best kind, consists, and reached so high a pitch of excellence in this, as the English. Our sense for rhetoric has in some ways done harm to us in our cultivation of literature, harm to us still more, in our cultivation of science; but in the true sphere of rhetoric, in public speaking, this sense has given us orators whom I do think we may, without fear of being contradicted and accused of blind national vanity, assert to have inherited the great Greek and Roman oratorical tradition more than the orators of any other country. Strafford, Bolingbroke, the two Pitts, Fox—to cite no other names—I imagine few would dispute that these call up the notion of an oratory in kind, in extent, in power, coming nearer than any other body of modern oratory to the oratory of Greece and Rome. And the affinity of spirit in our best public life and greatest public men to those of Rome, has often struck observers, foreign as well as English. Now, not only have the Germans shown no eminent aptitude for rhetoric such as the English have shown;—that was not to be expected, since our public life has done so much to develop an aptitude of this kind, and the public life of the Germans has done so little;—but they seem in a singular degree devoid of any aptitude at all for rhetoric. Take a speech from the throne in Prussia, and compare it with a speech from the throne in England. Assuredly it is not in speeches from the throne that English rhetoric or any rhetoric shows its best side;—they are often cavilled at, often justly cavilled at;—no wonder, for this form of composition is beset with very trying difficulties. But what is to be remarked is this,—a speech from the throne falls essentially within the sphere of rhetoric; it is one's sense of rhetoric which has to fix its tone and style, so as to keep a certain note always sounding in it; in an English speech from the throne, whatever its faults, this rhetorical note is always struck and kept to; in a Prussian speech from the throne, never. An English speech from the throne is rhetoric; a Prussian speech is half talk,—heavy talk,—and half effusion. This is one instance, it may be said; true, but in one instance of this kind the presence or the absence of an aptitude for rhetoric is decisively shown. Well, then, why am I not to say that we English get our rhetorical sense from the Norman element in us, our turn for this strenuous, direct, high-spirited talent of oratory, from the influence of the strenuous, direct, high-spirited Normans? Modes of life, institutions, government, and other such causes, are sufficient, I shall be told, to account for English oratory. Modes of life, institutions, government, climate, and so forth—let me say it once for all—will further or hinder the development of an aptitude, but they will not by themselves create the aptitude or

explain it. On the other hand, a people's habit and complexion of nature go far to determine its modes of life, institutions and government, and even to prescribe the limits within which the influences of climate shall tell upon it.

However, it is not my intention, in these remarks, to lay it down for certain that this or that part of our powers, shortcomings, and behaviour, is due to a Celtic, German, or Norman element in us. To establish this I should need much wider limits, and a knowledge, too, far beyond what I possess; all I purpose is to point out certain correspondences, not yet, perhaps, sufficiently observed and attended to, which seem to lead towards certain conclusions. The following up the inquiry till full proof is reached, —or perhaps, full disproof,—is what I want to suggest to more competent persons. Premising this, I now go on to a second matter, somewhat more delicate and inward than that with which I began. Every one knows how well the Greek and Latin races, with their direct sense for the visible, palpable world, have succeeded in the plastic arts. The sheer German races, too, with their honest love of fact, and their steady pursuit of it,—their fidelity to nature, in short,—have attained a high degree of success in these arts; few people will deny that Albert Dürer and Rubens, for example, are to be called masters in painting, and in the high kind of painting. The Celtic races, on the other hand, have shown a singular inaptitude for the plastic arts; the abstract, severe character of the Druidical religion, its dealing with the eye of the mind rather than the eye of the body, its having no elaborate temples and beautiful idols, all point this way from the first; its sentiment cannot satisfy itself, cannot even find a resting-place for itself, in colour and form; it presses on to the impalpable, the ideal. The forest of trees and the forest of rocks, not hewn timber and carved stones, suit its aspirations for something not to be bounded or expressed. With this tendency, the Celtic races have, as I remarked before, been necessarily almost impotent in the higher branches of the plastic arts. Ireland, that has produced so many powerful spirits, has produced no great sculptors or painters. Cross into England. The inaptitude for the plastic art strikingly diminishes, as soon as the German, not the Celtic element, preponderates in the race. And yet in England, too, in the English race, there is something which seems to prevent our reaching real mastership in the plastic arts, as the more unmixed German races have reached it. Reynolds and Turner are painters of genius, who can doubt it? but take a European jury, the only competent jury in these cases, and see if you can get a verdict giving them the rank of masters, as this rank is given to Raphael and Correggio, or to Albert Dürer and Rubens. And observe in what points our English pair succeed, and in what they fall short. They fall short in *architectonic*, in the highest power of composition by which painting accomplishes the very uttermost which it is given to painting to accomplish; the highest sort of composition, the highest application of the art of painting, they either do not attempt, or they fail in it. Their defect, therefore, is on the side of

art, of plastic art. And they succeed in magic, in beauty, in grace, in expressing almost the inexpressible : here is the charm of Reynolds's children and Turner's seas ; the impulse to express the inexpressible carries Turner so far, that at last it carries him away, and even long before he is quite carried away, even in works that are justly extolled, one can see the corner, as the French say, of insanity. The excellence, therefore, the success, is on the side of spirit. Does not this look as if a Celtic stream met the main German current in us, and gave it a somewhat different course from that which it takes naturally ? we have Germanism enough in us, enough patient love for fact and matter, to be led to attempt the plastic arts, and we make much more way in them than the pure Celtic races make ; but at a certain point our Celtism comes in, with its love of emotion, sentiment, the inexpressible, and gives our best painters a bias. And the point at which it comes in is just that critical point where the flowering of art into its perfection commences ; we have plenty of painters who never reach this point at all, but remain always mere journeymen, in bondage to matter ; but those who do reach it, instead of going on to the true consummation of the masters in painting, are a little overbalanced by soul and feeling, work too directly for these, and so do not get out of their art all that may be got out of it.

The same modification of our Germanism by another force which seems Celtic, is visible in our religion. Here, too, we may trace a gradation between Celt, Englishman, and German, the difference which distinguishes Englishmen from German appearing attributable to a Celtic element in us. Germany is the land of exegesis, England is the land of Puritanism. The religion of Wales is more emotional and sentimental than English Puritanism ; Romanism has indeed given way to Calvinism among the Welsh, the one superstition has supplanted the other, but the Celtic sentiment which made the Welsh such devout Catholics, remains, and gives unction to their Methodism : theirs is not the controversial, rationalistic, intellectual side of Protestantism, but the devout, emotional, religious side. Among the Germans, Protestantism has been carried on into rationalism and science. The English hold a middle place between the Germans and the Welsh ; their religion has the exterior forms and apparatus of a rationalism, so far their Germanic nature carries them ; but long before they get to science, their feeling, their Celtic element catches them, and turns their religion all towards piety and unction. So English Protestantism has the outside appearance of an intellectual system, and the inside reality of an emotional system : this gives it its tenacity and force, for what is held with the ardent attachment of feeling is believed to have at the same time the scientific proof of reason. The English Puritan, therefore (and Puritanism is the characteristic form of English Protestantism) stands between the German Protestant and the Celtic Methodist ; his real affinity, indeed, at present, being rather with his Welsh kinsman, if kinsman he may be called, than with his German.

Sometimes one is left in doubt from whence the check and limit to Germanism in us proceeds, whether from a Celtic source or from a Norman source. Of the true steady-going German nature the bane is, as I remarked, flat commonness: there seems no end to its capacity for platitude; it has neither the quick perception of the Celt to save it from platitude, nor the strenuousness of the Norman; it is only raised gradually out of it by science, but it jogs through almost interminable platitudes first. The English nature is not raised to science, but something in us, whether Celtic or Norman, seems to set a bound to our advance in platitude, to make us either shy of platitude, or impatient of it. I open an English reading-book for children, and I find these two characteristic stories in it, one of them of English growth, the other of German. Take the English story first:—

“A little boy accompanied his elder sister while she busied herself with the labours of the farm, asking questions at every step, and learning the lessons of life without being aware of it.

“‘Why, dear Jane,’ he said, ‘do you scatter good grain on the ground; would it not be better to make good bread of it than to throw it to the greedy chickens?’

“‘In time,’ replied Jane, ‘the chickens will grow big, and each of them will fetch money at the market. One must think on the end to be attained without counting trouble, and learn to wait.’

“Perceiving a colt, which looked eagerly at him, the little boy cried out: ‘Jane, why is the colt not in the fields with the labourers helping to draw the carts?’

“‘The colt is young,’ replied Jane, ‘and he must lie idle till he gets the necessary strength; one must not sacrifice the future to the present.’”

The reader will say that is most mean and trivial stuff, the vulgar English nature in full force; just such food as the Philistine would naturally provide for his young. He will say he can see the boy fed upon it growing up to be like his father, to be all for business, to despise culture, to go through his dull days, and to die without having ever lived. That may be so; but now take the German story (one of Krummacher’s), and see the difference:—

“There lived at the court of King Herod a rich man who was the king’s chamberlain. He clothed himself in purple and fine linen, and fared like the king himself.

“Once a friend of his youth, whom he had not seen for many years, came from a distant land to pay him a visit. Then the chamberlain invited all his friends and made a feast in honour of the stranger.

“The tables were covered with choice food placed on dishes of gold and silver, and the finest wines of all kinds. The rich man sate at the head of the table, glad to do the honours to his friend who was seated at his right hand. So they ate and drank, and were merry.

“Then the stranger said to the chamberlain of King Herod: ‘Riches

and splendour like thine are nowhere to be found in my country.' And he praised his greatness, and called him happy above all men on earth.

"Well, the rich man took an apple from a golden vessel. The apple was large, and red, and pleasant to the eye. Then said he: 'Behold, this apple hath rested on gold, and its form is very beautiful.' And he presented it to the stranger, the friend of his youth. The stranger cut the apple in two; and behold, in the middle of it there was a worm!

"Then the stranger looked at the chamberlain; and the chamberlain bent his eyes on the ground, and sighed."

There it ends. Now I say, one sees there an abyss of platitude open, and the German nature swimming calmly about in it, which seems in some way or other to have its entry screened off for the English nature. The English story leads with a direct issue into practical life: a narrow and dry practical life, certainly, but yet enough to supply a plain motive for the story; the German story leads simply nowhere except into bathos. Shall we say that the Norman talent for affairs saves us here, or the Celtic perceptive instinct? one of them it must be, surely. The Norman turn seems most germane to the matter here immediately in hand; on the other hand, the Celtic turn, or some degree of it, some degree of its quick perceptive instinct, seems necessary to account for the full difference between the German nature and ours. Even in Germans of genius or talent the want of quick light tact, of instinctive perception of the impropriety or impossibility of certain things, is singularly remarkable. Herr Gervinus's prodigious discovery about Handel being an Englishman and Shakspeare a German, the incredible mare's-nest Goethe finds in looking for the origin of Byron's *Manfred*—these are things from which no deliberate care or reflection can save a man, only an instinct can save him from them, an instinct that they are absurd; who can imagine Charles Lamb making Herr Gervinus's blunder, or Shakspeare making Goethe's? but from the sheer German nature this intuitive tact seems something so alien, that even genius fails to give it. And yet just what constitutes special power and genius in a man seems often to be his blending with the basis of his national temperament, some additional gift or grace not proper to that temperament; Shakspeare's greatness is thus in his blending an openness and flexibility of spirit, not English, with the English basis; Addison's, in his blending a moderation and delicacy, not English, with the English basis; Burke's, in his blending a largeness of view and richness of thought, not English, with the English basis. In Germany itself, in the same way, the greatness of their great Frederic lies in his blending a rapidity and clearness, not German, with the German basis; the greatness of Goethe in his blending a love of form, nobility, and dignity,—the grand style,—with the German basis. But the quick, sure, instinctive perception of the incongruous and absurd not even genius seems to give in Germany; at least, I can think of only one German of genius, Lessing (for Heine was a Jew, and the Jewish temperament is quite another thing from the German), who shows it in an eminent degree.

If we attend closely to the terms by which foreigners seek to hit off the impression which we and the Germans make upon them, we shall detect in these terms a difference which makes, I think, in favour of the notion I am propounding. Nations in hitting off one another's characters are apt, we all know, to seize the unflattering side rather than the flattering; the mass of mankind always do this, and indeed they really see what is novel, and not their own, in a disfiguring light. Thus we ourselves, for instance, popularly say "the phlegmatic Dutchman" rather than "the sensible Dutchman," or "the grimacing Frenchman" rather than "the polite Frenchman." Therefore neither we nor the Germans should exactly accept the description strangers give of us, but it is enough for my purpose that strangers, in characterizing us with a certain shade of difference, do at any rate make it clear that there appears this shade of difference, though the character itself, which they give us both, may be a caricature rather than a faithful picture of us. Now it is to be noticed that those sharp observers, the French—who have a double turn for sharp observation, for they have both the quick perception of the Celt and the Latin's gift for coming plump upon the fact,—it is to be noticed, I say, that the French put a curious distinction in their popular, depreciating, we will hope inadequate, way of hitting off us and the Germans. While they talk of the "*bêtise allemande*," they talk of the "*gaucherie anglaise*;" while they talk of the "*Allemand balourd*," they talk of the "*Anglais empêtré*;" while they call the German "*niais*," they call the Englishman "*mélan-colique*." The difference between the epithets *balourd* and *empêtré* exactly gives the difference in character I wish to seize; *balourd* means heavy and dull, *empêtré* means hampered and embarrassed. This points to a certain mixture and strife of elements in the Englishman; to the clashing of a Celtic quickness of perception with a Germanic instinct for going steadily along close to the ground. The Celt, as we have seen, has not at all, in spite of his quick perception, the Latin talent for dealing with the fact, dexterously managing it and making himself master of it; Latin or Latinized people have felt contempt for him on this account, have treated him as a poor creature, just as the German, who arrives at fact in a different way from the Latins, but who arrives at it, has treated him; the couplet of Chrestien of Troyes about the Welsh:—

. . . Gallois sont tous, par nature,
Plus fous que bêtes en pâture—

is well known, and expresses the genuine verdict of the Latin mind on the Celts. But the perceptive instinct of the Celt feels and anticipates, though he has that in him which cuts him off from command of the world of fact; he sees what is wanting to him well enough, his mere eye is not less sharp, nay, it is sharper, than the Latin's. He is a quick genius, checkmated for want of strenuousness or else patience. The German has not the Latin's sharp precise glance on the world of fact, and dexterous behaviour in it; he fumbles with it much and long, but his honesty and patience give him the rule of it in the long run—a surer rule, some

of us think, than the Latin gets;—still, his behaviour in it is not quick and dexterous. The Englishman, in so far as he is German,—and he is mainly German,—proceeds in the steady-going German fashion; if he were all German he would proceed thus for ever without self-consciousness or embarrassment; but, in so far as he is Celtic, he has snatches of quick instinct which often make him feel he is fumbling, show him visions of an easier, more dexterous behaviour, disconcert him and fill him with mis-giving. No people, therefore, are so shy, so self-conscious, so embarrassed as the English, because two natures are mixed in them, and natures which pull them such different ways. The Germanic part, indeed, triumphs in us, we are a Germanic people; but not so wholly as to exclude hauntings of Celtism, which clash with our Germanism, producing, as I believe, our *humour*, neither German nor Celtic, and so affect us that we strike people as odd and singular, not to be referred to any known type, and like nothing but ourselves. “Nearly every Englishman,” says an excellent and by no means unfriendly observer, George Sand, “Nearly every Englishman, however good-looking he may be, has always something singular about him which easily comes to seem comic—a sort of typical awkwardness (*gaucherie typique*) in his looks or appearance, which hardly ever wears out.” I say this strangeness is accounted for by the English nature being mixed as we have seen, while the Latin nature is all of a piece, and so is the German nature, and the Celtic nature.

It is impossible to go very fast when the matter with which one has to deal, besides being new and little explored, is also by its nature so subtle, eluding one's grasp unless one handles it with all possible delicacy and care. It is in our poetry that the Celtic part in us has left its trace clearest, and in our poetry I must follow it before I have done. So much has had to be said by way of preparation, and of enabling ourselves to lay the finger, with some certainty, upon what is Celtic and what is not, that I have reached my limits without accomplishing all I intended, and shall have to return to the subject yet once more, in order at last to finish with it.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

The Sleeping Beauty in the Wood.

A KIND enchantress one day put into my hand a mystic volume prettily lettered and bound in green, saying, "I am so fond of this book. It has all the dear old fairy tales in it; one never tires of them. Do take it."

I carried the little book away with me, and spent a very pleasant quiet evening at home by the fire, with H. at the opposite corner, and other old friends, whom I felt I had somewhat neglected of late. Jack and the Beanstalk, Puss in Boots, the gallant and quixotic Giant-killer, and dearest Cinderella, whom we every one of us must have loved, I should think ever since we first knew her in her little brown pinafore: I wondered, as I shut them all up for the night between their green boards, what it was that made these stories so fresh and so vivid. Why did not they fall to pieces, vanish, explode, disappear, like so many of their contemporaries and descendants? And yet far from being forgotten and passing away, it would seem as if each generation in turn as it came into the world looks to be delighted still by the brilliant pageant, and never tires or wearies of it. And on their side the princes and princesses never seem to grow any older; the castles and the lovely gardens flourish without need of repair or whitewash, or plumbers or glaziers. The princesses' gowns too—sun, moon, and star-colour—do not wear out or pass out of fashion or require altering. Even the seven-leagued boots do not appear to be the worse for wear. Numbers of realistic stories for children have passed away. Little Henry and his Bearer, Poor Harry and Lucy, have very nearly given up their little artless ghosts and prattle, and ceased making their own beds for the instruction of less excellently brought-up little boys and girls, and notwithstanding a very interesting article in the *Saturday Review*, it must be owned that Harry Sandford and Tommy Merton are not familiar playfellows in our nurseries and schoolrooms, and have passed somewhat out of date. But not so all these centenarians—Prince Riquet, Carabas, Little Red Riding-hood, Bluebeard and others. They seem as if they would never grow old. They play with the children, they amuse the elders, there seems no end to their fund of spirits and perennial youth.

H., to whom I made this remark, said from the opposite chimney-corner, "No wonder; the stories are only histories of real living persons turned into fairy princes and princesses. Fairy stories are everywhere and every-day. We are all princes and princesses in disguise, or ogres or wicked dwarfs. All these histories are the histories of human nature, which does not seem to change very much in a thousand years or so, and we don't get tired of the fairies because they are so true to it."

After this little speech of H.'s, we spent an unprofitable half-hour

reviewing our acquaintance, and classing them under their real characters and qualities. We had dined with Lord Carabas only the day before and met Puss in Boots—Beauty and the Beast were also there; we uncharitably counted up, I am ashamed to say, no less than six Bluebeards. Jack and the Beanstalk we had met just starting on his climb. A Red Riding-hood; a girl with toads dropping from her mouth: we knew three or four of each. Cinderellas—alas! who does not know more than one dear, poor, pretty Cinderella; and, as for sleeping Princesses in the woods, how many one can reckon up! Young, old, ugly, pretty, awakening, sleeping still.

"Do you remember Cecilia Lulworth," said H., "and Dorlicote? Poor Cecilia!" Some lives are *couleur de rose*, people say; others seem to be, if not *couleur de rose* all through, yet full of bright, beautiful tints, blues, pinks, little bits of harmonious cheerfulness. Other lives, if not so brilliant, and seeming more or less grey at times, are very sweet and gentle in tone, with faint gleams of gold or lilac to brighten them. And then again others, alas! are black and hopeless from the beginning. Besides these, there are some which have always appeared to me as if they were of a dark, dull hue; a dingy, heavy brown, which no happiness, or interest, or bright colour could ever enliven. Blues turn sickly, roses seem faded, and yellow lilacs look red and ugly upon these heavy backgrounds. Poor Cecilia, as H. called her,—hers had always seemed to me one of these latter existences, unutterably dull, commonplace, respectable, stunted, ugly, and useless.

Lulworth Hall, with the great dark park bounded by limestone walls, with iron gates here and there, looked like a blot upon the bright and lovely landscape. The place from a distance, compared with the surrounding country, was a blur and a blemish as it were, sad, silent, solitary.

Travellers passing by sometimes asked if the place was uninhabited, and were told, "No, shure—the fam'ly lives thear all the yeaurr round." Some charitable souls might wonder what life could be like behind those dull gates. One day a young fellow riding by saw rather a sweet woman's face gazing for an instant through the bars, and he went on his way with a momentary thrill of pity. Need I say that it was poor Cecilia who looked out vacantly to see who was passing along the high-road. She was surrounded by hideous moreen, oil-cloth, punctuality, narrow-mindedness, horsehair, and mahogany. Loud bells rang at intervals, regular, monotonous. Surly but devoted attendants waited upon her. She was rarely alone; her mother did not think it right that a girl in Cecilia's position should "race" about the grounds unattended; as for going outside the walls it was not to be thought of. When Cecilia went out with her gloves on, and her goloshes, her mother's companion, Miss Bowley, walked beside her up and down the dark laurel walk at the back of the house,—up and down, down and up, up and down. "I think I am getting tired, Maria," Miss Lulworth would say at last. "If so we had better return to the hall," Maria would reply, "although it is before our time." And then they would walk home in silence, between the iron railings and laurel-bushes.

As Cecilia walked erectly by Miss Bowley's side, the rooks went whirling over their heads, the slugs crept sleepily along the path under the shadow of the grass and the weeds ; they heard no sounds except the cawing of the birds, and the distant monotonous hacking noise of the gardener and his boy digging in the kitchen-garden.

Cecilia, peeping into the long drab drawing-room on her return, might perhaps see her mother, erect and dignified, at her open desk, composing, writing, crossing, re-reading, an endless letter to an indifferent cousin in Ireland, with a single candle and a small piece of blotting-paper, and a pen-wiper made of ravelings, all spread out before her.

"You have come home early, Cecil," says the lady, without looking up. "You had better make the most of your time, and practise till the dressing-bell rings. Maria will kindly take up your things."

And then in the chill twilight Cecilia sits down to the jangling instrument, with the worn silk flutings. A faded rack it is upon which her fingers had been distended ever since she can remember. A great many people think there is nothing in the world so good for children as scoldings, whippings, dark cupboards, and dry bread and water, upon which they expect them to grow up into tall, fat, cheerful, amiable men and women, and a great many people think that for grown-up young people the silence, the chillness, the monotony and sadness of their own fading twilight days is all that is required. Mrs. Lulworth and Maria Bowley her companion, Cecilia's late governess, were quite of this opinion. They themselves, when they were little girls, had been slapped, snubbed, locked up in closets, thrust into bed at all sorts of hours, flattened out on backboards, set on high stools to play the piano for days together, made to hem frills five or six weeks long, and to learn immense pieces of poetry, so that they had to stop at home all the afternoon. And though Mrs. Lulworth had grown up stupid, suspicious, narrow-minded, soured, and overbearing, and had married for an establishment, and Miss Bowley, her governess's daughter, had turned out nervous, undecided, melancholy, and anxious, and had never married at all, yet they determined to bring up Cecilia as they themselves had been brought up, and sincerely thought they could not do better.

When Mrs. Lulworth married, she said to Maria, "You must come and live with me, and help to educate my children some day, Maria. For the present I shall not have a home of my own ; we are going to reside with my husband's aunt, Mrs. Dormer. She is a very wealthy person, far advanced in years. She is greatly annoyed with Mr. and Mrs. John Lulworth's vagaries, and she has asked me and my husband to take their places at Dorlicote Hall." At the end of ten years Mrs. Lulworth wrote again :—"We are now permanently established in our aunt's house. I hear you are in want of a situation ; pray come and superintend the education of my only child Cecilia (she is named after her godmother, Mrs. Dormer). She is now nearly three years old, and I feel that she begins to require some discipline."

This letter was written at that same desk twenty-two years before Cecilia began her practising, that autumn evening. She was twenty-five years old now, but like a child in inexperience, in ignorance, in placidity; a fortunate stolidity and slowness of temperament had saved her from being crushed and nipped in the bud, as it were. She was not bored because she had never known any other life. It seemed to her only natural that all days should be alike, rung in and out by the jangling breakfast, lunch, dinner, and prayer bells. Mr. Dormer—a little chip of a man—read prayers suitable for every day in the week; the servants filed in, maids first, then the men. Once Cecilia saw one of the maids blush and look down smiling as she marched out after the others. Miss Dormer wondered a little, and thought she would ask Susan why she looked so strangely, but Susan married the groom soon after, and went away, and Cecilia never had an opportunity of speaking to her.

Night after night Mr. Dormer replaced his spectacles with a click, and pulled up his shirt-collar when the service was ended. Night after night old Mrs. Dormer coughed a little moaning cough. If she spoke, it was generally to make some little bitter remark. Every night she shook hands with her nephew and niece, kissed Cecilia's blooming cheek, and patted out of the room. She was a little woman with starling eyes. She had never got over her husband's death. She did not always know when she moaned. She dressed in black, and lived alone in her turret, where she had various old-fashioned occupations—tatting, camphor-boxes to sort, a real old spinning-wheel and distaff among other things, at which Cecilia, when she was a child, had pricked her fingers trying to make it whirr as her aunt did. Spinning-wheels have quite gone out, but I know of one or two old ladies who still use them. Mrs. Dormer would go nowhere, and would see no one. So at least her niece, the master-spirit, declared, and the old lady got to believe it at last. I don't know how much the fear of the obnoxious John and his wife and children may have had to do with this arrangement.

When her great-aunt was gone it was Cecilia's turn to gather her work together at a warning sign from her mother, and walk away through the long chilly passages to her slumbers in the great green four-post bed. And so time passed. Cecilia grew up. She had neither friends nor lovers. She was not happy nor unhappy. She could read, but she never cared to open a book. She was quite contented; for she thought Lulworth Hall the finest place, and its inmates the most important people in the world. She worked a great deal, embroidering interminable quilts and braided toilet-covers and fish-napkins. She never thought of anything but the utterest commonplaces and platitudes. She considered that being respectable and decorous, and a little pompous and overbearing, was the duty of every well-brought-up lady and gentleman. To-night she banged away very placidly at Rhodes' air, for the twentieth time breaking down in the same passage and making the same mistake, until the dressing-bell rang, and Cecilia, feeling she had done her duty, then

extinguished her candle, and went upstairs across the great chill hall, up the bare oil-cloth gallery, to her room.

Most young women have some pleasure, whatever their troubles may be, in dressing, and pretty trinkets and beads and ribbons and necklaces. An unconscious love of art and intuition leads some of them, even plain ones, to adorn themselves. The colours and ribbon ends brighten bright faces, enliven dull ones, deck what is already loveable, or, at all events, make the most of what materials there are. Even a maypole, crowned and flowered and tastily ribboned, is a pleasing object. And, indeed, the art of decoration seems to me a charming natural instinct, and one which is not nearly enough encouraged, and a gift which every woman should try to acquire. Some girls, like birds, know how to weave, out of ends of rags, of threads and morsels and straws, a beautiful whole, a work of real genius for their habitation. Frivolities, say some; waste of time, say others,—expense, vanity. The strong-minded dowagers shake their heads at it all—Mrs. Lulworth among them; only why had Nature painted Cecilia's cheeks of brightest pink, instead of billous orange, like poor Maria Bowley's? why was her hair all crisp and curly? and were her white even teeth, and her clear grey eyes, vanity and frivolity too? Cecilia was rather too stout for her age; she had not much expression in her face. And no wonder. There was not much to be expressive about in her poor little stunted life. She could not go into raptures over the mahogany sideboard, the camphine lamp in the drawing-room, the four-post beds indoors, the laurel-bushes without, the Moorish temple with yellow glass windows, or the wigwam summer-house, which were the alternate boundaries of her daily walks.

Cecilia was not allowed a fire to dress herself by; a grim maid, however, attended, and I suppose she was surrounded, as people say, by every comfort. There was a horsehair sofa, everything was large, solid, brown as I have said, grim, and in its place. The rooms at Lulworth Hall did not take the impress of their inmate, the inmate was moulded by the room. There were in Cecilia's no young lady-like trifles lying here and there; upon the chest of drawers there stood a mahogany workbox, square, with a key—that was the only attempt at feminine elegance—a little faded chenille, I believe, was to be seen round the clock on the chimney-piece, and a black and white check dressing-gown and an ugly little pair of slippers were set out before the toilet-table. On the bed, Cecilia's dinner costume was lying—a sickly green dress, trimmed with black—and a white flower for her hair. On the toilet-table an old-fashioned jasper serpent-necklace and a set of amethysts were displayed for her to choose from, also mittens and a couple of hair-bracelets. The girl was quite content, and she would go down gravely to dinner, smoothing out her hideous toggery.

Mrs. Dormer never came down before dinner. All day long she stayed up in her room, dozing and trying remedies, and occasionally looking over old journals and letters until it was time to come downstairs. She liked

to see Cecilia's pretty face at one side of the table, while her nephew carved, and Mrs. Lulworth recounted any of the stirring events of the day. She was used to the life—she was sixty when they came to her, she was long past eighty now—the last twenty years had been like a long sleep, with the dream of what happened when she was alive and in the world continually passing before her.

When the Lulworths first came to her she had been in a low and nervous state, only stipulated for quiet and peace, and that no one was to come to her house of mourning. The John Lulworths, a cheery couple, broke down at the end of a month or two, and preferred giving up all chance of their aunt's great inheritance to living in such utter silence and seclusion. Upon Charles, the younger brother and his wife, the habit had grown, until now anything else would have been toil and misery to them. Except the old rector from the village, the doctor now and then, no other human creature ever crossed the threshold. For Cecilia's sake Miss Bowley once ventured to hint,—

"Cecilia with her expectations has the whole world before her." "Maria!" said Mrs. Lulworth severely; and indeed to this foolish woman it seemed as if money would add more to her daughter's happiness than the delights, the wonders, the interests, the glammers of youth. Charles Lulworth, shrivelled, selfish, dull, worn-out, did not trouble his head about Cecilia's happiness, and let his wife do as she liked with the girl.

This especial night when Cecilia came down in her ugly green dress, it seemed to her as if something unusual had been going on. The old lady's eyes looked bright and glittering, her father seemed more animated than usual, her mother looked mysterious and put out. It might have been fancy, but Cecilia thought they all stopped talking as she came into the room; but then dinner was announced, and her father offered Mrs. Dormer his arm immediately, and they went into the dining-room.

It must have been fancy. Everything was as usual. "They have put up a few hurdles in Dalron's field, I see," said Mrs. Lulworth. "Charles, you ought to give orders for repairing the lock of the harness-room."

"Have they seen to the pump-handle?" said Mr. Lulworth.

"I think not." And then there was a dead silence.

"Potatoes," said Cecilia to the footman. "Mamma, we saw ever so many slugs in the laurel walk, Maria and I,—didn't we, Maria? I think there are a great many slugs in our place."

Old Mrs. Dormer looked up while Cecilia was speaking, and suddenly interrupted her in the middle of her sentence. "How old are you, child?" she said; "are you seventeen or eighteen?"

"Eighteen! aunt Cecilia. I am five-and-twenty," said Cecilia, staring.

"Good gracious! is it possible?" said her father, surprised.

"Cecil is a woman now," said her mother.

"Five-and-twenty," said the old lady, quite crossly. "I had no idea time went so fast. She ought to have been married long ago; that is, if she means to marry at all."

"Pray, my dear aunt, do not put such ideas—" Mrs. Lulworth began.

"I don't intend to marry," said Cecilia, peeling an orange, and quite unmoved, and she slowly curled the rind of her orange in the air. "I think people are very stupid to marry. Look at poor Jane Simmonds—her husband beats her; Jones saw her."

"So you don't intend to marry?" said the old lady, with an odd inflection in her voice. "Young ladies were not so wisely brought up in my early days," and she gave a great sigh. "I was reading an old letter this morning from your poor father Charles—all about happiness, and love in a cot, and two little curly-headed boys—Jack, you know, and yourself. I should rather like to see John again."

"What, my dear aunt, after his unparalleled audacity? I declare the thought of his impudent letter makes my blood boil," exclaimed Mrs. Lulworth.

"Does it?" said the old lady. "Cecilia, my dear, you must know that your uncle has discovered that the entail was not cut off from a certain property which my father left me, and which I brought to my husband. He has therefore written me a very business-like letter, in which he says he wishes for no alteration at present, but begs that, in the event of my making my will, I should remember this, and not complicate matters by leaving it to yourself, as had been my intention. I see nothing to offend in the request. Your mother thinks differently."

Cecilia was so amazed at being told anything that she only stared again, and opening a wide mouth, popped into it such a great piece of orange that she could not speak for some minutes.

"Cecilia has certainly attained years of discretion," said her great-aunt; "she does not compromise herself by giving any opinion on matters she does not understand."

Notwithstanding her outward imperturbability, Cecilia was a little stirred and interested by this history, and by the little conversation which had preceded it. Her mother was sitting upright in her chair as usual, netting with vigorous action. Her large foot outstretched, her stiff bony hands working and jerking monotonously. Her father was dozing in his arm-chair; old Mrs. Dormer, too, was nodding in her corner. The monotonous Maria was stitching in the lamplight. Grey and black shadows loomed all round her. The far end of the room was quite dark; the great curtains swept from their ancient cornices. Cecilia, for the first time in all her life, wondered whether she should ever live all her life in this spot, ever go away? It seemed impossible, unnatural, that she should ever do so. Silent, dull as it was, she was used to it, and did not know what was amiss.

Young Frank Lulworth, the lawyer of the family—John Lulworth's eldest son—it was who had found it all out. His father wrote that with Mrs. Dormer's permission he proposed coming down in a day or two to show her the papers, and to explain to her personally how the matter stood. "My son and I," said John Lulworth, "both feel that this would

be far more agreeable to our feelings, and perhaps to yours, than having recourse to the usual professional intervention, for we have no desire to press our claims for the present, and we only wish that in the ultimate disposal of your property you should be aware how the matter really stands. We have always been led to suppose that the estate actually in question has been long destined by you for your grand-niece, Cecilia Lulworth. I hear from our old friend Dr. Hicks, that she is remarkably pretty and very amiable. Perhaps such vague possibilities are best unmentioned, but it has occurred to me that in the event of a mutual understanding springing up between the young folks,—my son and your grand-niece,—the connection might be agreeable to us all, and lead to a renewal of that family intercourse which has been, to my great regret, suspended for some time past."

Old Mrs. Dormer, in her shaky Italian handwriting, answered her nephew's letter by return of post :

"MY DEAR NEPHEW,—I must acknowledge the receipt of your epistle of the 13th instant. By all means invite your son to pay us his proposed visit. We can then talk over business matters at our leisure, and young Francis can be introduced to his relatives. Although a long time has elapsed since we last met, believe me, my dear nephew, not unmindful of bygone associations, and yours very truly always,

"C. DORMER."

The letter was in the postman's bag when old Mrs. Dormer informed Mrs. Charles of what she had done.

Frank Lulworth thought that in all his life he had never seen anything so dismal, so silent, so neglected, as Dorlicote Park, when he drove up a few days after, through the iron gates and along the black laurel wilderness which led to the house. The laurel branches, all unpruned, untrained, were twisting savagely in and out, wreathing and interlacing one another, clutching tender shootings, wrestling with the young oak-trees and the limes. He passed by black and sombre avenues leading to mouldy temples, to crumbling summer-houses ; he saw what had once been a flower-garden, now all run to seed—wild, straggling, forlorn ; a broken-down bench, a heap of hurdles lying on the ground, a field-mouse darting across the road, a desolate autumn sun shining upon all this mouldering ornament and confusion. It seemed more forlorn and melancholy by contrast, somehow, coming as he did out of the loveliest country and natural sweetness into the dark and tangled wilderness within these limestone walls of Dorlicote.

The parish of Dorlicote-cum-Rockington looks prettier in the autumn than at any other time. A hundred crisp tints, jewelled rays—greys, browns, purples, glinting golds, and silvers, rustle and sparkle upon the branches of the nut-trees, of the bushes and thickets. Soft blue mists and purple tints rest upon the distant hills ; scarlet berries glow among the brown leaves of the hedges ; lovely mists fall and vanish suddenly, revealing bright and sweet autumnal sights ; blackberries, stacks of corn, brown leaves crisping upon the turf, great pears hanging sweetening in the sun over the cottage lintels, cows grazing and whisking their tails, blue smoke

curling from the tall farm chimneys : all is peaceful, prosperous, golden. You can see the sea on clear days from certain knolls and hillocks. . . .

Out of all these pleasant sights young Lulworth came into this dreary splendour. He heard no sounds of life—he saw no one. His coachman had opened the iron gate. “They don’t keep no one to moind the gate,” said the driver, “only tradesmen cooms to th’ouse.” Even the gardener and his boy were out of the way ; and when they got sight of the house at last, many of the blinds were down and shutters shut, and only two chimneys were smoking. There was some one living in the place, however, for a watch-dog who was lying asleep in his kennel woke up and gave a heart-rending howl when Frank got out and rang at the bell.

He had to wait an immense time before anybody answered, although a little page in buttons came and stared at him in blank amazement from one of the basement windows, and never moved. Through the same window Frank could see into the kitchen, and he was amused when a sleepy fat cook came up behind the little page and languidly boxed his ears, and seemed to order him off the premises.

The butler, who at last answered the door, seemed utterly taken aback—nobody had called for months past, and here was a perfect stranger taking out his card, and asking for Mrs. Dormer as if it was the most natural thing in the world. The under-butler was half-asleep in his pantry, and had not heard the door-bell. The page—the very same whose ears had been boxed—came wondering to the door, and went to ascertain whether Mrs. Dormer would see the gentleman or not.

“What a vault, what a catacomb, what an ugly old place !” thought Frank, as he waited. He heard steps far, far away : then came a long silence, and then a heavy tread slowly approaching, and the old butler beckoned to him to follow—through a cobweb-colour room, through a brown room, through a grey room, into a great dim drab drawing-room, where the old lady was sitting alone. She had come down her back stairs to receive him ; it was years since she had left her room before dinner.

Even old ladies look kindly upon a tall, well-built, good-looking, good-humoured young man. Frank’s nose was a little too long, his mouth a little too straight ; but he was a handsome young fellow with a charming manner. Only as he came up he was somewhat shy and undecided—he did not know exactly how to address the old lady. This was his great-aunt. He knew nothing whatever about her, but she was very rich ; she had invited him to come, and she had a kind face, he thought : should he, —ought he to embrace her—perhaps he ought, and he made the slightest possible movement in this direction. Mrs. Dormer, divining his object, pushed him weakly away. “How do you do ? No embraces, thank you.* I don’t care for kissing at my age. Sit down—there, in that chair opposite—and now tell me about your father, and all the family, and about this ridiculous discovery of yours. I don’t believe a word of it.”

The interview between them was long and satisfactory on the whole.

The unconscious Cecilia and Miss Bowley returned that afternoon from their usual airing, and as it happened, Cecilia said, "Oh, Maria! I left my mittens in the drawing-room, last night. I will go and fetch them." And little thinking of what was awaiting her, she flung open the door and marched in through the ante-room—mushroom hat and brown veil, goloshes and dowdy gown, as usual. "What is this?" thought young Lulworth; "why, who would have supposed it was such a pretty girl?" for suddenly the figure stopped short, and a lovely fresh face looked up in utter amazement out of the hideous disguise.

"There, don't stare, child," said the old lady. "This is Francis Lulworth, a very intelligent young man, who has got hold of your fortune and ruined all your chances, my dear. He wanted to embrace me just now. Francis, you may as well salute your cousin instead: she is much more of an age for such compliments," said Mrs. Dormer, waving her hand.

The impassive Cecilia, perfectly bewildered and not in the least understanding, only turned her great sleepy astonished eyes upon her cousin, and stood perfectly still as if she was one of those beautiful wax-dolls one sees stuck up to be stared at. If she had been surprised before, utter consternation can scarcely convey her state of mind when young Lulworth stepped forward and obeyed her aunt's behest. And, indeed, a stronger-minded person than Cecilia might have been taken aback, who had come into the drawing-room to fetch her mittens, and was met in such an astounding fashion. Frank, half laughing, half kindly, seeing that Cecilia stood quite still and stared at him, supposed it was expected and did as he was told.

The poor girl gave one gasp of horror, and blushed for the first time, I believe, in the course of her whole existence. Bowley, fixed and open-mouthed from the inner room, suddenly fled with a scream, which recalled Cecilia to a sense of outraged propriety: for blushing and blinking more deeply, she at last gave three little sobs, and then, O horror! burst into tears!

"Highty-tighty; what a much ado about nothing!" said the old lady, losing her temper and feeling not a little guilty, and much alarmed as to what her niece Mrs. Lulworth might say were she to come on the scene.

"I beg your pardon. I am so very, very sorry," said the young man, quite confused and puzzled. "I ought to have known better. I frightened you. I am your cousin, you know, and really—pray, pray excuse my stupidity," he said, looking anxiously into the fair placid face along which the tears were coursing in two streams, like a child's.

"Such a thing never happened in all my life before," said Cecilia. "I know it is wrong to cry, but really—really——"

"Leave off crying directly, miss," said her aunt, testily, "and let us have no more of this nonsense." The old lady dreaded the mother's arrival every instant. Frank, half laughing, but quite unhappy at the poor girl's distress, had taken up his hat to go that minute, not knowing what else to do.

"Ah ! you're going," says old Mrs. Dormer ; "no wonder. Cecilia, you have driven your cousin away by your rudeness."

"I'm not rude," sobbed Cecilia. "I can't help crying."

"The girl is a greater idiot than I took her for," cried the old lady. "She has been kept here locked up, until she has not a single idea left in her silly noddle. No man of sense could endure her for five minutes. You wish to leave the place, I see, and no wonder ?"

"I really think," said Frank, "that under the circumstances it is the best thing I can do. Miss Lulworth, I am sure, would wish me to go."

"Certainly," said Cecilia. "Go away, pray go away. Oh, how silly I am."

Here was a catastrophe !

The poor old fairy was all puzzled and bewildered : her arts were powerless in this emergency. The princess had awakened, but in tears. The prince still stood by, distressed and concerned, feeling horribly guilty, and yet scarcely able to help laughing. Poor Cecilia ! her aunt's reproaches had only bewildered her more and more ; and for the first time in her life she was bewildered, discomposed, forgetful of hours. It was the hour of calisthenics ; but Miss Lulworth forgot everything that might have been expected from a young lady of her admirable bringing-up.

Fairy tales are never very long, and this one ought to come to an end. The princess was awake now, and her simplicity and beauty touched the young prince, who did not, I think, really intend to go, though he took up his hat.

Certainly the story would not have been worth the telling if they had not been married soon after, and lived happily all the rest of their lives.

* * * *

It is not in fairy tales only that things fall out as one could wish, and indeed, H. and T. agreed the other night that fairies, although invisible, had not entirely vanished out of the land. .

It is certainly like a fairy transformation to see Cecilia now-a-days in her own home with her children and husband about her. Bright, merry, full of sympathy and interest, she seems to grow prettier every minute.

When Frank fell in love with her and proposed, old Mrs. Dormer insisted upon instantly giving up the Dorlicote Farm for the young people to live in. Mr. and Mrs. Frank Lulworth are obliged to live in London, but they go there every summer with their children ; and for some years after her marriage, Cecilia's godmother, who took the opportunity of the wedding to break through many of her recluse habits, used to come and see her every day in a magnificent yellow chariot.

Someday I may perhaps tell you more about the fairies and enchanting princesses of my acquaintance.

Thought and Language.

FULL half a century ago, Dugald Stewart, in his *Philosophical Essays*, speaking of an act of the human understanding manifested in language, calls it a mystery yet to be explained. He was quite convinced that the existing explanations were entirely wide of the mark—that the meaning of a sentence was neither the aggregate of the meanings of the several parts of speech, nor the result of a comparison between two of the parts ending in the affirmation or denial of their agreement by means of a verbal copula. But while he speaks contemptuously of these explanations, he gives none of his own—he seems to think the explanation impossible. Is it so? Of course, in this, as in most other inquiries, we come at last to ground that we cannot penetrate; but so far as the phenomenon can be explained, it is the purpose of this paper to show that since his time it has been explained. And if the explanation has not been received so as to be built upon universally in works of education, it is not that its truth has been or can be successfully questioned, but that, inasmuch as it would interfere with and set aside all that has been hitherto deemed fundamental in these works, there must arise, as a preparation for the change, an apparent necessity for it, springing from progress in other departments of learning.

Now, it may be safely affirmed that there is very wide evidence of such progress, and the pages of this Magazine bear witness to it. Two articles may be especially referred to,—one in the number for May, 1863, which describes some curious experiments by Dr. Kaussmaul of Erlangen, to ascertain the inner life of new-born infants; the other in the number for September, 1865, on "Induction and Deduction," signed, Justus Von Liebig. A doctrine which they substantiate, though they do not expressly refer to it, must be mentioned as a truth which they include, namely, what has been called the *relativity* of human knowledge, in contradistinction to *instinctive* knowledge, which last is given to brutes, and (with an exception to be presently noticed) to brutes only; either with life originally, or with the development of their sensations. As to man, the doctrine of the relativity of his knowledge is a point on which philosophers in this country are at one, however it may have to make its way among the unphilosophical multitude with whose strongest prepossessions it is at war. Say to any ordinary thinker that a man born blind can never know what light is, and you say what is at once admitted; but say that neither can he know, that is, be conscious or aware of darkness, and you are met by a stare of wondering incredulity. What! not know darkness when, whether he opens his eyelids or keeps them shut, darkness is before him, and around him? That is precisely the reason that he cannot know it—

cannot know the thing itself, though he can class it with things which he does know, and talk about it with as much rationality as his clear-seeing neighbours. For darkness is the privation of light; and though it is his peculiar position to be unable to experience the privation of what he never had, yet he knows the relation abstractly from the things because he knows experimentally other things that stand related in the same way—silence, for example, as the privation of sound; empty space as the privation of that which filled it or can fill it; scentlessness as the privation or absence of scent. And this, universally, is the nature and character of human knowledge. We know nothing as of itself, but only as it stands out in some relation to another thing; in other words, the human understanding must have premises before it, or it does not act—it is dormant till appointed or adequate premises arise. In only one particular does the human creature receive knowledge, in the early stage of his existence, immediately with sensation, as irrational creatures always receive it, if, as was said above, not at once with life, yet as their sensations ripen. It was ascertained by the experiments reported in the former of the two papers to which allusion has been made, that while the new-born babe seeks its first food instinctively, and has knowledge of it immediately through the organs of taste, yet as to its other sensations, there was no evidence to show that any knowledge accompanied them. Of man, then, it may be said that when newly born, he has everything to learn but the perception of his first food; and without that perception he would perish almost as soon as he exists.

But some formidable questions arise if we admit this statement. If man's earliest existence is sensational only, how does it become intellectual also? And having become intellectual as well as sensational, how is it that our early-acquired knowledge is not separable at will from our sensations, but has the character and effect of being instinctive, as perception in irrational creatures always is? These questions physiology, in its present advanced state, is quite able to solve. The solution cannot be entered upon here, but it amounts to this: that our direct or real sensations—those, to wit, which are produced by outward causes—by repetition in series, generate from within unreal or ideal effects, and these take place of the real when the latter fall away from the series, so that the real and the unreal, the substantial and the ideal, now stand forth in contrast, and the one is known because the other is known. But the act of the understanding which yields this knowledge having fulfilled its end, needs no repetition, any more than a syllogism needs repetition at full when its conclusion is established. The real or the ideal sensation then by its mere presence brings up the acquired knowledge, and thenceforward man's being is intellectual as well as sensational; that is to say, he now knows the outward world distinctly from himself, and is prepared to acquire by degrees the further knowledge of it which awaits the occasions, and these come in his way sometimes so that he cannot escape them, sometimes so that he has to choose his premises, sometimes by a chance that falls appa-

rently to him alone, sometimes by wild poetical surmise, of which kind of surmise the philosophy of Plato affords the most splendid example in the history of human thought; and in our day, we boast that they are sometimes attained by scientific process, that is, by the surmise of a previously disciplined mind, followed and established, if established, by Baconian research.

That what physiology is thus able to trace to its beginning is the true explanation we have ground in two directions to assert: first, because unless man from the beginning obtained his knowledge differently from brutes, he would not be the only creature capable of rational language; and secondly, because, while the knowledge which is given with the gift of life to other creatures is at once adequate to the ends of their being, so that they are never able of themselves to alter or increase it, the knowledge which man gets he gets by degrees, and always under the liability to error. What, indeed, has been the progress of knowledge up to the present time but the correction of misunderstandings arising out of unwarrantable assumptions of premises, leaving us in this condition—that however good may seem our present ground (and the goodness is attested by the fruit—the practical benefits it yields), yet we are never sure that a future generation will not see, under other relations than we see, those very things concerning which we are at present most assured? This is to assert, in other words, that although, in the process of DEDUCTION, or giving of our knowledge forth or out, we cannot err with relation to the premises we count on having attained, yet in the previous process of INDUCTION, or drawing of our knowledge in, we are always liable to error.

Thus far we have led the reader on ground established by views already opened in the pages of this Magazine. It remains to show that the actual ministry of language to thought accords with these views, and first to assert—what indeed is never denied—that language is used for the two purposes named, that is to say, for *induction* and for *deduction*. It is when used for the latter purpose that we shall have to discredit the existing modes of explanation, and to substitute one that shall adapt itself to the exigency.

When we deduce (that is, bring forth) what we know and wish to be known, we put parts of speech together in order to make the whole speech by which it shall be signified. Now the knowledge or meaning we wish to convey is one and singular—why, then, in trying to convey it, do we use an expression made up of parts? Not certainly by preference; for suppose the meaning to be already provided with some one indivisible expression, there is no doubt that the one single expression would be used. A Roman of old said *esurio* when the occasion to say so arose; on the occasion arising to an Englishman, he puts three parts of speech together and says *I am hungry*. But in the latter case, is not the meaning as much one and indivisible as in the other? No, will be the common answer; for each part of speech has its separate meaning, and it is by putting these meanings together that we get the whole meaning. A very little consideration will

show that this explanation cannot stand. It is true that *I*, and *am*, and *hungry*, have each a separate meaning, but each word, by its very grammatical character as a part of speech, and not the whole speech, forces us to wait the result. Let the speaker stop at *I*, and the hearer asks, Well, what about *I*? Let him stop at *I am*, and a similar question is put. And when the whole speech is formed, has there been, in correspondence with the addition of parts, an addition of the meaning of the parts? Quite the contrary—the effect has been subtraction, not addition. Till *I* is joined to *am*, and *am* to *I*, the term *I* has no meaning which corresponds to anything that is known or can be known in the whole compass of nature as nature exists for us, inasmuch as there is no such thing as a person who is not an individual, while *I*, in the abstract, is general or universal in meaning. So *am* stands for existence abstracted from everything existing in particular; an abstraction having nothing corresponding to it in nature. These abstract terms, then, with their abstract meanings, have no value in the deductive process but as premises out of which special meanings shall arise, and when that meaning is yielded, the premises cease to have separate meanings. The remaining part of speech, *hungry*, signifies being hungry abstracted from every one that hungers; but in joining it to *I-am*, we take its abstract meaning away; and now the three parts of speech are one expression with one meaning, whose parts are separately meaningless. In point of fact, with regard to this particular example (and the example is anything but singular), custom has rendered us inattentive to the meanings of the separate parts, so that the English expression is, to all intents and purposes, as much a word of four unmeaning syllables as is the Latin one.

Now, the effect here asserted as to the junction of the parts of speech in this instance, is the effect UNIVERSALLY of such junction. Whenever we put two parts of speech together which are fit, as we say, to make sense, this sense is one, and the expression is one:—if you divide the expression, you do not divide the meaning; meaning has no parts; you do but go back to the meanings out of which the special meaning has sprung. If I put together the two parts of speech, *black* and *bird*, to form the one name for the one thing, *black* no longer signifies anything that is black, and *bird* no longer signifies any bird; what was general in the meaning of each part has flown off; *black* restricts *bird* to the special meaning, and *bird* restricts *black*, and we have one name of two syllables as the effect.*

* This fact admits of the following illustration:—



Let the two circles represent the abstract meanings of two parts of speech. Suppose they are not fitted to make sense, they can but stand side by side, as in the first mode of placing them; but if they have that previous fitness, it will be because each contains

But see what is the consequence of the undeniable fact. If parts of speech as fast as they are put together yield meaning more and more special, and that special meaning is always one, then a long discourse, if its parts are logically as well as grammatically put together, will be but as one word for the one special state of thought attained. Let us see how this applies to a syllogism formally drawn out. *Every man is a brother.* By our doctrine this proposition is one expression for the one special meaning attained from general premises; and the following is another such expression:—*Every negro is a man.* But the moment of understanding these special meanings relatively is the moment of understanding a still more special meaning out of them, and whether we express this result in a third proposition or not, the result—that is the knowledge attained—remains, namely, that every negro is a brother. Observe how the effect would fail if, after saying, *Every man is a brother*, we were to say, *Every negro is woolly-headed.* Well and good, would be the observation of our respondent, but what then? There is no result, no one truth included in the two, and we leave the propositions grammatically, as they are logically, distinct.

We have nothing different in effect when, instead of logically related propositions, we put together logically related parts of simpler grammatical character; for instance, *large circles.* Here the two parts yield one special meaning—conclusion, if we choose to call it so—what was general in the meaning of each being sunk by the mutual restriction. But now, attempt to put together *square* and *circles*; and this, in many languages, you can do effectually, as far as grammar is concerned, by making the adjective agree with the substantive in number, gender, and case; but is there any logical result? The two parts retain their separate meanings, just as do the two propositions in the previous example.

some of the things meant by the other, and the passing of one circle partially over the other so as to create a space which they both include, while what remains of each circle falls away and is lost, will correspond to the process intended to be illustrated.

When, however, one of the two parts has a privative meaning, such as we find in *no*, *not*, *dis*, *un*, *in*, *less*, the illustration must be modified a little. The one circle must then go, not partially, but quite over the other, so as to obliterate it. Still we get this effect—a special meaning out of two previous meanings; for the meaning obliterated, nevertheless, restricts that which obliterates it, and so from *no* and *body* we get *nobody*; from *no* and *thing*, *nothing*; from *can* and *not*, *cannot*, from *dis* and *join*, *disjoin*; from *un* and *happy*, *unhappy*; from *in* and *glorious*, *inglorious*; from *friend* and *less*, *friendless*.

In the instances here given there is this peculiarity, that the premises of the special meaning are not written separately, but are joined so as to yield at once the one expression for the one meaning. This may be done when the meaning has so often occurred that we no longer need the premises leading to it; but whether it be done or not, the principle of such junction accompanies every act of logical development. For instance, from *no* and *man* we get the part of speech *no-man*; from *quite* and *happy*, the part of speech *quite-happy*; from *is* and *quite-happy*, the part of speech *is-quite-happy*; and from *no-man* and *is-quite-happy*, the completed speech. But even this completed speech becomes a part of speech if followed or preceded by a part that makes sense with it.

It appears clear, then, that the process of putting parts of speech together in order to reach a meaning is not a process in which we add meaning to meaning, but the very reverse. There is, however, another way of accounting for what takes place, and this we have to examine; for which end we will go back to our first example, *I am hungry*. Here, it is said, *I* is the subject, *hungry* the predicate, and *am* the copula. By using these as instruments in the operation, we are said to institute a comparison between the subject and the proposed predicate, and, after due consideration, we affirm their agreement by means of the copula. If this is a true description of the process, of course ours is erroneous; and that it essentially differs from ours, is apparent from this, that by the very nature of the asserted process, the parts of speech are kept in their unfused abstract state; and when they join, it is not to yield something different in meaning to the previous parts, as in chemical combination we get a new substance out of the combining elements, but the junction is purely mechanical, the elements remaining precisely what they were.

But here the question arises—Is a part of speech of no value or use while it remains separate? The answer is, that in the induction of knowledge it is of incalculable use and value, although in the deduction its use is no other than has been shown. It is by the assistance of terms at first special—at first significant of the individual things, real and unreal, that make up the outward and inward worlds in which for the present we live, and move, and have our being—it is by these that we assemble and group the particulars, and entertain the relations in which they stand to each other abstractly from the things themselves, though the things suggest the abstractions. On this point we have nothing new in doctrine to offer:—succinctly we may state that as the business of deduction is specialization, that of induction is generalization, and generalization always includes abstraction—the abstracting of what is common to all the individuals of the species, genus, or class. And it may perhaps startle some persons to declare that these abstractions can never carry us beyond the worlds of fancy and reality from which they spring, and to which, when properly used, they always return; so that any attempt to transcend, by their means, our present sphere of action and of thought must end, if it end at all, in an enormous delusion.



FORCE AND CUNNING

Armadale.

BOOK THE FIFTH.

CHAPTER III.—continued.

THE DIARY BROKEN OFF.



THE doctor repeated the servant's message in a tone which betrayed unmistakable irritation at finding himself admitted no farther than the door.

"Your mistress is not well enough to see visitors? Give her that card," said the doctor, "and say I expect her, the next time I call, to be well enough to see me."

"If his voice had not told me plainly that he felt in no friendly mood towards Mrs. Oldershaw, I daresay I should have let him go without claiming his acquaintance. But, as things were, I felt an impulse to speak to him or to anybody who had a grudge

against Mother Jezebel. There was more of my small spitefulness in this, I suppose. Anyway, I slipped downstairs; and, following the doctor out quietly, overtook him in the street.

"I had recognized his voice, and I recognized his back as I walked behind him. But when I called him by his name, and when he turned round with a start and confronted me, I followed his example, and started on my side. The doctor's face was transformed into the face of a perfect stranger! His baldness had hidden itself under an artfully grizzled wig. He had allowed his whiskers to grow, and had dyed them to match his new head of hair. Hideous circular spectacles bestrode his nose in place of the neat double eyeglass that he used to carry in his hand; and a black neckerchief, surmounted by immense shirt-collars, appeared as the unworthy successor of the clerical white cravat of former times. Nothing remained of the man I once knew but the comfortable plumpness of his

figure, and the confidential courtesy and smoothness of his manner and his voice.

"'Charmed to see you again,' said the doctor, looking about him a little anxiously, and producing his card-case in a very precipitate manner. 'But my dear Miss Gwilt, permit me to rectify a slight mistake on your part. Doctor Downward of Pimlico is dead and buried; and you will infinitely oblige me if you will never, on any consideration, mention him again!'

"I took the card he offered me, and discovered that I was now supposed to be speaking to 'Doctor Le Doux, of the Sanatorium, Fair-weather Vale, Hampstead!'

"'You seem to have found it necessary,' I said, 'to change a great many things since I last saw you? Your name, your residence, your personal appearance, ——?'

"'And my branch of practice,' interposed the doctor. 'I have purchased of the original possessor (a person of feeble enterprise and no resources) a name, a diploma, and a partially completed sanatorium for the reception of nervous invalids. We are open already to the inspection of a few privileged friends—come and see us. Are you walking my way? Pray take my arm, and tell me to what happy chance I am indebted for the pleasure of seeing you again?'

"I told him the circumstances exactly as they had happened, and I added (with a view to making sure of his relations with his former ally at Pimlico) that I had been greatly surprised to hear Mrs. Oldershaw's door shut on such an old friend as himself. Cautious as he was, the doctor's manner of receiving my remark satisfied me at once that my suspicions of an estrangement were well founded. His smile vanished, and he settled his hideous spectacles irritably on the bridge of his nose.

"'Pardon me if I leave you to draw your own conclusions,' he said. 'The subject of Mrs. Oldershaw is, I regret to say, far from agreeable to me under existing circumstances. A business difficulty connected with our late partnership at Pimlico, entirely without interest for a young and brilliant woman like yourself. Tell me your news! Have you left your situation at Thorpe-Ambrose? Are you residing in London? Is there anything, professional or otherwise, that I can do for you?'

"That last question was a more important one than he supposed. Before I answered it, I felt the necessity of parting company with him and of getting a little time to think.

"'You have kindly asked me, doctor, to pay you a visit,' I said. 'In your quiet house at Hampstead, I may possibly have something to say to you which I can't say in this noisy street. When are you at home at the Sanatorium? Should I find you there later in the day?'

"The doctor assured me that he was then on his way back, and begged that I would name my own hour. I said, 'Towards the afternoon;' and, pleading an engagement, hailed the first omnibus that passed

us. 'Don't forget the address,' said the doctor, as he handed me in. 'I have got your card,' I answered—and so we parted.

"I returned to the hotel, and went up into my room, and thought over it very anxiously.

"The serious obstacle of the signature on the marriage register still stood in my way as unmanageably as ever. All hope of getting assistance from Mrs. Oldershaw was at an end. I could only regard her henceforth as an enemy hidden in the dark—the enemy, beyond all doubt now, who had had me followed and watched when I was last in London. To what other counsellor could I turn for the advice which my unlucky ignorance of law and business obliged me to seek from some one more experienced than myself? Could I go to the lawyer whom I consulted when I was about to marry Midwinter in my maiden name? Impossible! To say nothing of his cold reception of me when I had last seen him, the advice I wanted this time, related (disguise the facts as I might) to the commission of a Fraud—a fraud of the sort that no prosperous lawyer would consent to assist, if he had a character to lose. Was there any other competent person I could think of? There was one, and one only—the doctor who had died at Pimlico, and had revived again at Hampstead.

"I knew him to be entirely without scruples; to have the business experience that I wanted myself; and to be as cunning, as clever, and as far-seeing a man as could be found in all London. Beyond this, I had made two important discoveries in connection with him that morning. In the first place, he was on bad terms with Mrs. Oldershaw,—which would protect me from all danger of the two leaguering together against me, if I trusted him. In the second place, circumstances still obliged him to keep his identity carefully disguised,—which gave me a hold over him in no respect inferior to any hold that I might give him over me. In every way he was the right man, the only man, for my purpose; and yet I hesitated at going to him—hesitated for a full hour and more, without knowing why!

"It was two o'clock before I finally decided on paying the doctor a visit. Having, after this, occupied nearly another hour in determining to a hair's breadth how far I should take him into my confidence, I sent for a cab at last, and set off towards three in the afternoon for Hampstead.

"I found the Sanatorium with some little difficulty.

"Fairweather Vale proved to be a new neighbourhood, situated below the high ground of Hampstead, on the southern side. The day was overcast, and the place looked very dreary. We approached it by a new road running between trees, which might once have been the park-avenue of a country house. At the end we came upon a wilderness of open ground, with half-finished villas dotted about, and a hideous litter of boards, wheelbarrows, and building materials of all sorts scattered in every direction.

At one corner of this scene of desolation stood a great overgrown dismal house, plastered with drab-coloured stucco, and surrounded by a naked unfinished garden, without a shrub or a flower in it—frightful to behold. On the open iron gate that led into this enclosure was a new brass plate, with ‘Sanatorium’ inscribed on it in great black letters. The bell, when the cabman rang it, pealed through the empty house like a knell; and the pallid withered old manservant in black, who answered the door, looked as if he had stepped up out of his grave to perform that service. He let out on me a smell of damp plaster and new varnish; and he let in with me a chilling draught of the damp November air. I didn’t notice it at the time—but writing of it now, I remember that I shivered as I crossed the threshold.

“I gave my name to the servant as ‘Mrs. Armadale,’ and was shown into the waiting-room. The very fire itself was dying of damp in the grate. The only books on the table were the doctor’s Works, in sober drab covers; and the only object that ornamented the walls was the foreign Diploma (handsomely framed and glazed), of which the doctor had possessed himself by purchase, along with the foreign name.

“After a moment or two, the proprietor of the Sanatorium came in, and held up his hands in cheerful astonishment at the sight of me.

“‘I hadn’t an idea who “Mrs. Armadale” was!’ he said. ‘My dear lady, have *you* changed your name, too? How sly of you not to tell me when we met this morning! Come into my private snuggerly—I can’t think of keeping an old and dear friend like you in the patients’ waiting-room.’

“The doctor’s private snuggerly was at the back of the house, looking out on fields and trees, doomed but not yet destroyed by the builder. Horrible objects in brass and leather and glass, twisted and turned as if they were sentient things writhing in agonies of pain, filled up one end of the room. A great book-case with glass doors extended over the whole of the opposite wall, and exhibited on its shelves long rows of glass jars, in which shapeless dead creatures of a dull white colour floated in yellow liquid. Above the fireplace hung a collection of photographic portraits of men and women, enclosed in two large frames hanging side by side with a space between them. The left-hand frame illustrated the effects of nervous suffering as seen in the face; the right-hand frame exhibited the ravages of insanity from the same point of view; while the space between was occupied by an elegantly-illuminated scroll, bearing inscribed on it the time-honoured motto, ‘Prevention is better than Cure.’

“‘Here I am, with my galvanic apparatus, and my preserved specimens, and all the rest of it,’ said the doctor, placing me in a chair by the fireside. ‘And there is my System mutely addressing you just above your head, under a form of exposition which I venture to describe as frankness itself. This is no madhouse, my dear lady. Let other men treat insanity, if they like—I stop it! No patients in the house as yet. But we live in an age when nervous derangement (parent of insanity) is

steadily on the increase; and in due time the sufferers will come. I can wait as Harvey waited, as Jenner waited. And now, do put your feet up on the fender, and tell me about yourself. You are married, of course? And what a pretty name! Accept my best and most heartfelt congratulations. You have the two greatest blessings that can fall to a woman's lot; the two capital H's, as I call them—Husband and Home.'

"I interrupted the genial flow of the doctor's congratulations at the first opportunity.

"I am married; but the circumstances are by no means of the ordinary kind,' I said seriously. 'My present position includes none of the blessings that are usually supposed to fall to a woman's lot. I am already in a situation of very serious difficulty—and before long I may be in a situation of very serious danger as well.'

"The doctor drew his chair a little nearer to me, and fell at once into his old professional manner and his old confidential tone.

"If you wish to consult me,' he said softly, 'you know that I have kept some dangerous secrets in my time, and you also know that I possess two valuable qualities as an adviser. I am not easily shocked; and I can be implicitly trusted.'

"I hesitated even now, at the eleventh hour, sitting alone with him in his own room. It was so strange to me to be trusting to anybody but myself! And yet, how could I help trusting another person, in a difficulty which turned on a matter of law?

"Just as you please, you know,' added the doctor. 'I never invite confidences. I merely receive them.'

"There was no help for it; I had come there not to hesitate, but to speak. I risked it, and spoke.

"The matter on which I wish to consult you,' I said, 'is not (as you seem to think) within your experience as a professional man. But I believe you may be of assistance to me, if I trust myself to your larger experience as a man of the world. I warn you, beforehand, that I shall certainly surprise and possibly alarm you before I have done.'

"With that preface, I entered on my story, telling him what I had settled to tell him—and no more.

"I made no secret, at the outset, of my intention to personate Armadale's widow; and I mentioned without reserve (knowing that the doctor could go to the office and examine the will for himself) the handsome income that would be settled on me in the event of my success. Some of the circumstances that followed next in succession, I thought it desirable to alter or conceal. I showed him the newspaper account of the loss of the yacht—but I said nothing about events at Naples. I informed him of the exact similarity of the two names; leaving him to imagine that it was accidental. I told him, as an important element in the matter, that my husband had kept his real name a profound secret from everybody but myself; but (to prevent any communication between them) I carefully concealed from the doctor what the assumed name under which Midwinter

had lived all his life really was. I acknowledged that I had left my husband behind me on the Continent; but when the doctor put the question, I allowed him to conclude—I couldn't with all my resolution tell him positively!—that Midwinter knew of the contemplated Fraud, and that he was staying away purposely so as not to compromise me by his presence. This difficulty smoothed over—or, as I feel it now, this baseness committed,—I reverted to myself, and came back again to the truth. One after another, I mentioned all the circumstances connected with my private marriage, and with the movements of Armadale and Midwinter, which rendered any discovery of the false personation (through the evidence of other people) a downright impossibility. 'So much,' I said, in conclusion, 'for the object in view. The next thing is to tell you plainly of a very serious obstacle that stands in my way.'

"The doctor, who had listened thus far without interrupting me, begged permission here to say a few words on his side before I went on.

"The 'few words' proved to be all questions—clever, searching, suspicious questions,—which I was, however, able to answer with little or no reserve, for they related, in almost every instance, to the circumstances under which I had been married, and to the chances for and against my lawful husband if he chose to assert his claim to me at any future time.

"My replies informed the doctor, in the first place, that I had so managed matters at Thorpe-Ambrose as to produce a general impression that Armadale intended to marry me; in the second place, that my husband's early life had not been of a kind to exhibit him favourably in the eyes of the world; in the third place, that we had been married without any witnesses present who knew us, at a large parish church in which two other couples had been married the same morning, to say nothing of the dozens on dozens of other couples (confusing all remembrance of us in the minds of the officiating people) who had been married since. When I had put the doctor in possession of these facts—and when he had further ascertained that Midwinter and I had gone abroad among strangers immediately after leaving the church; and that the men employed on board the yacht in which Armadale had sailed from Somersetshire (before my marriage) were now away in ships voyaging to the other end of the world—his confidence in my prospects showed itself plainly in his face. 'So far as I can see,' he said, 'your husband's claim to you (after you have stepped into the place of the dead Mr. Armadale's widow) would rest on nothing but his own bare assertion. And that I think you may safely set at defiance. Excuse my apparent distrust of the gentleman. But there might be a misunderstanding between you in the future, and it is highly desirable to ascertain beforehand exactly what he could or could not do under those circumstances. And now that we have done with the main obstacle that I see in the way of your success, let us by all means come to the obstacle that you see next!'

"I was willing enough to come to it. The tone in which he spoke of Midwinter, though I myself was responsible for it, jarred on me horribly, and roused for the moment some of the old folly of feeling which I fancied I had laid asleep for ever. I rushed at the chance of changing the subject, and mentioned the discrepancy in the register between the hand in which Midwinter had signed the name of Allan Armadale, and the hand in which Armadale of Thorpe-Ambrose had been accustomed to write his name, with an eagerness which it quite diverted the doctor to see.

"Is that all?" he asked, to my infinite surprise and relief, when I had done. 'My dear lady, pray set your mind at ease! If the late Mr. Armadale's lawyers want a proof of your marriage, they won't go to the church-register for it, I can promise you!'

"What!" I exclaimed in astonishment; 'do you mean to say that the entry in the register is not a proof of my marriage?'

"It is a proof," said the doctor, 'that you have been married to somebody. But it is no proof that you have been married to Mr. Armadale of Thorpe-Ambrose. Jack Nokes or Tom Styles (excuse the homeliness of the illustration!) might have got the Licence, and gone to the church to be married to you under Mr. Armadale's name—and the register (how could it do otherwise?) must in that case have innocently assisted the deception. I see I surprise you. My dear madam, when you opened this interesting business you surprised me—I may own it now—by laying so much stress on the curious similarity between the two names. You might have entered on the very daring and romantic enterprise in which you are now engaged, without necessarily marrying your present husband. Any other man would have done just as well, provided he was willing to take Mr. Armadale's name for the purpose.'

"I felt my temper going at this. 'Any other man would not have done just as well,' I rejoined instantly. 'But for the similarity of the names, I should never have thought of the enterprise at all.'

"The doctor admitted that he had spoken too hastily. 'That personal view of the subject had, I confess, escaped me,' he said. 'However, let us get back to the matter in hand. In the course of what I may term an adventurous medical life, I have been brought more than once into contact with the gentlemen of the law, and have had opportunities of observing their proceedings in cases of, let us say, Domestic Jurisprudence. I am quite sure I am correct in informing you that the proof which will be required by Mr. Armadale's representatives will be the evidence of a witness present at the marriage, who can speak to the identity of the bride and bridegroom from his own personal knowledge.'

"But I have already told you," I said, 'that there was no such person present.'

"Precisely," rejoined the doctor. 'In that case, what you now want, before you can safely stir a step in the matter, is—if you will pardon me the expression—a ready-made witness, possessed of rare moral and personal resources, who can be trusted to assume the necessary

character, and to make the necessary Declaration before a magistrate. Do you know of any such person?' asked the doctor, throwing himself back in his chair, and looking at me with the utmost innocence.

" 'I only know You,' I said.

" The doctor laughed softly. 'So like a woman!' he remarked, with the most exasperating good-humour. 'The moment she sees her object, she dashes at it headlong the nearest way. Oh, the sex! the sex!'

" 'Never mind the sex!' I broke out impatiently. 'I want a serious answer—Yes or No?'

" The doctor rose, and waved his hand with great gravity and dignity all round the room. 'You see this vast establishment,' he began; 'you can possibly estimate to some extent the immense stake I have in its prosperity and success. Your excellent natural sense will tell you that the Principal of this Sanatorium must be a man of the most unblemished character——'

" 'Why waste so many words,' I said, 'when one word will do? You mean No!'

" The Principal of the Sanatorium suddenly relapsed into the character of my confidential friend.

" 'My dear lady,' he said, 'it isn't Yes, and it isn't No, at a moment's notice. Give me till to-morrow afternoon. By that time, I engage to be ready to do one of two things—either to withdraw myself from this business at once, or to go into it with you heart and soul. Do you agree to that? Very good—we may drop the subject then till to-morrow. Where can I call on you when I have decided what to do?'

" There was no objection to my trusting him with my address at the hotel. I had taken care to present myself there as 'Mrs. Armadale;' and I had given Midwinter an address at the neighbouring post-office to write to, when he answered my letters. We settled the hour at which the doctor was to call on me; and, that matter arranged, I rose to go, resisting all offers of refreshment, and all proposals to show me over the house. His smooth persistence in keeping up appearances after we had thoroughly understood each other, disgusted me. I got away from him as soon as I could, and came back to my diary and my own room.

" We shall see how it ends to-morrow. My own idea is that my confidential friend will say Yes.

" *November 24th.*—The doctor has said Yes, as I supposed—but on terms which I never anticipated. The condition on which I have secured his services amounts to nothing less than the payment to him, on my stepping into the place of Armadale's widow, of half my first year's income—in other words, six hundred pounds!

" I protested against this extortionate demand in every way I could think of. All to no purpose. The doctor met me with the most engaging frankness. Nothing, he said, but the accidental embarrassment of his position at the present time would have induced him to mix himself up

in the matter at all. He would honestly confess that he had exhausted his own resources, and the resources of other persons whom he described as his 'backers,' in the purchase and completion of the Sanatorium. Under those circumstances, six hundred pounds in prospect was an object to him. For that sum he would run the serious risk of advising and assisting me. Not a farthing less would tempt him—and there he left it, with his best and friendliest wishes, in my hands !

"It ended in the only way in which it could end. I had no choice but to accept the terms, and to let the doctor settle things on the spot as he pleased. The arrangement once made between us, I must do him the justice to say that he showed no disposition to let the grass grow under his feet. He called briskly for pen, ink, and paper, and suggested opening the campaign at Thorpe-Ambrose by to-night's post.

"We agreed on a form of letter which I wrote, and which he copied on the spot. I entered into no particulars at starting. I simply asserted that I was the widow of the deceased Mr. Armadale ; that I had been privately married to him ; that I had returned to England on his sailing in the yacht from Naples ; and that I begged to enclose a copy of my marriage-certificate, as a matter of form with which I presumed it was customary to comply. The letter was addressed to 'The representatives of the late Allan Armadale, Esq., Thorpe-Ambrose, Norfolk.' And the doctor himself carried it away, and put it in the post.

"I am not so excited and so impatient for results as I expected to be, now that the first step is taken. The thought of Midwinter haunts me like a ghost. I have been writing to him again—as before, to keep up appearances. It will be my last letter, I think. My courage feels shaken, my spirits get depressed, when my thoughts go back to Turin. I am no more capable of facing the consideration of Midwinter at this moment than I was in the bygone time. The day of reckoning with him, once distant and doubtful, is a day that may come to me now, I know not how soon. And here I am, trusting myself blindly to the chapter of Accidents still !

"*November 25th.*—At two o'clock to-day the doctor called again by appointment. He has been to his lawyers (of course without taking them into our confidence) to put the case simply of proving my marriage. The result confirms what he has already told me. The pivot on which the whole matter will turn, if my claim is disputed, will be the question of identity ; and it may be necessary for the witness to make his Declaration in the magistrates' presence before the week is out.

"In this position of affairs, the doctor thinks it important that we should be within easy reach of each other, and proposes to find a quiet lodging for me in his neighbourhood. I am quite willing to go anywhere—for, among the other strange fancies that have got possession of me, I have an idea that I shall feel more completely lost to Midwinter if I move out of the neighbourhood in which his letters are addressed to me. I was

awake and thinking of him again last night. This morning I have finally decided to write to him no more.

"After staying half an hour, the doctor left me—having first inquired whether I would like to accompany him to Hampstead to look for lodgings. I informed him that I had some business of my own which would keep me in London. He inquired what the business was. 'You will see,' I said, 'to-morrow or next day.'

"I had a moment's nervous trembling when I was by myself again. My business in London, besides being a serious business in a woman's eyes, took my mind back to Midwinter in spite of me. The prospect of removing to my new lodging had reminded me of the necessity of dressing in my new character. The time had come now for getting *my widow's weeds*.

"My first proceeding, after putting my bonnet on, was to provide myself with money. I got what I wanted to fit me out for the character of Armadale's widow, by nothing less than the sale of Armadale's own present to me on my marriage—the ruby ring! It proved to be a more valuable jewel than I had supposed. I am likely to be spared all money anxieties for some time to come.

"On leaving the jeweller's, I went to the great mourning shop in Regent Street. In four and twenty hours (if I can give them no more) they have engaged to dress me in my widow's costume from head to foot. I had another feverish moment when I left the shop; and, by way of further excitement on this agitating day, I found a surprise in store for me on my return to the hotel. An elderly gentleman was announced to be waiting to see me. I opened my sitting-room door—and there was old Bashwood!

"He had got my letter that morning, and had started for London by the next train to answer it in person. I had expected a great deal from him, but I had certainly not expected *that*. It flattered me. For the moment, I declare it flattered me!

"I pass over the wretched old creature's raptures and reproaches, and groans and tears, and weary long prosings about the lonely months he had passed at Thorpe-Ambrose, brooding over my desertion of him. He was quite eloquent at times—but I don't want his eloquence here. It is needless to say that I put myself right with him, and consulted his feelings before I asked him for his news. What a blessing a woman's vanity is sometimes! I almost forgot my risks and responsibilities, in my anxiety to be charming. For a minute or two, I felt a warm little flutter of triumph. And it *was* a triumph—even with an old man! In a quarter of an hour, I had him smirking and smiling, hanging on my lightest words in an ecstasy, and answering all the questions I put to him, like a good little child.

"Here is his account of affairs at Thorpe-Ambrose, as I gently extracted it from him bit by bit:—

"In the first place, the news of Armadale's death has reached Miss

Milroy. It has so completely overwhelmed her that her father has been compelled to remove her from the school. She is back at the cottage, and the doctor is in daily attendance. Do I pity her? Yes! I pity her exactly as much as she once pitied me!

"In the next place, the state of affairs at the great house, which I expected to find some difficulty in comprehending, turns out to be quite intelligible, and certainly not discouraging so far. Only yesterday, the lawyers on both sides came to an understanding. Mr. Darch (the family solicitor of the Blanchards, and Armadale's bitter enemy in past times) represents the interests of Miss Blanchard, who is next heir to the estate, and who has, it appears, been in London on business of her own for some time past. Mr. Smart, of Norwich (originally employed to overlook Bashwood in the steward's office), represents the deceased Armadale. And this is what the two lawyers have settled between them.

"Mr. Darch, acting for Miss Blanchard, has claimed the possession of the estate and the right of receiving the rents at the Christmas audit, in her name. Mr. Smart, on his side, has admitted that there is great weight in the family solicitor's application. He cannot see his way, as things are now, to contesting the question of Armadale's death, and he will consent to offer no resistance to the application, if Mr. Darch will consent, on his side, to assume the responsibility of taking possession in Miss Blanchard's name. This Mr. Darch has already done; and the estate is now virtually in Miss Blanchard's possession.

"One result of this course of proceeding will be (as Bashwood thinks) to put Mr. Darch in the position of the person who really decides on my claim to the widow's place and the widow's money. The income being charged on the estate, it must come out of Miss Blanchard's pocket; and the question of paying it would appear therefore to be a question for Miss Blanchard's lawyer. To-morrow will probably decide whether this view is the right one—for my letter to Armadale's representatives will have been delivered at the great house this morning.

"So much for what old Bashwood had to tell me. Having recovered my influence over him, and possessed myself of all his information so far, the next thing to consider was the right use to turn him to in the future. He was entirely at my disposal, for his place at the steward's office has been already taken by Miss Blanchard's man of business, and he pleaded hard to be allowed to stay and serve my interests in London. There would not have been the least danger in letting him stay, for I had, as a matter of course, left him undisturbed in his conviction that I really am the widow of Armadale of Thorpe-Ambrose. But with the doctor's resources at my command, I wanted no assistance of any sort in London; and it occurred to me that I might make Bashwood more useful by sending him back to Norfolk to watch events there in my interests.

"He looked sorely disappointed (having had an eye evidently to paying his court to me in my widowed condition!) when I told him of the conclusion at which I had arrived. But a few words of persuasion,

and a modest hint that he might cherish hopes in the future if he served me obediently in the present, did wonders in reconciling him to the necessity of meeting my wishes. He asked helplessly for 'instructions' when it was time for him to leave me and travel back by the evening train. I could give him none, for I had no idea as yet of what the legal people might or might not do. 'But suppose something happens,' he persisted, 'that I don't understand, what am I to do, so far away from you?' I could only give him one answer. 'Do nothing,' I said. 'Whatever it is, hold your tongue about it, and write, or come up to London immediately to consult me.' With those parting directions, and with an understanding that we were to correspond regularly, I let him kiss my hand, and sent him off to the train.

"Now that I am alone again, and able to think calmly of the interview between me and my elderly admirer, I find myself recalling a certain change in old Bashwood's manner which puzzled me at the time, and which puzzles me still.

"Even in his first moments of agitation at seeing me, I thought that his eyes rested on my face with a new kind of interest while I was speaking to him. Besides this, he dropped a word or two afterwards, in telling me of his lonely life at Thorpe-Ambrose, which seemed to imply that he had been sustained in his solitude by a feeling of confidence about his future relations with me when we next met. If he had been a younger and a bolder man (and if any such discovery had been possible), I should almost have suspected him of having found out something about my past life which had made him privately confident of controlling me, if I showed any disposition to deceive and desert him again. But such an idea as this in connection with old Bashwood is simply absurd. Perhaps I am over-excited by the suspense and anxiety of my present position? Perhaps the merest fancies and suspicions are leading me astray? Let this be as it may, I have at any rate more serious subjects than the subject of old Bashwood to occupy me now. To-morrow's post may tell me what Armadale's representatives think of the claim of Armadale's widow.

"*November 26th.*—The answer has arrived this morning, in the form (as Bashwood supposed) of a letter from Mr. Darch. The crabbed old lawyer acknowledges my letter in three lines. Before he takes any steps, or expresses any opinion on the subject, he wants evidence of identity as well as the evidence of the certificate; and he ventures to suggest that it may be desirable, before we go any further, to refer him to my legal advisers.

"*Two o'clock.*—The doctor called shortly after twelve to say that he had found a lodging for me within twenty minutes' walk of the Sanatorium. In return for his news, I showed him Mr. Darch's letter. He took it away at once to his lawyers, and came back with the necessary information for my guidance. I have answered Mr. Darch by sending him the address of my legal advisers—otherwise, the doctor's lawyers—without

making any comment on the desire that he has expressed for additional evidence of the marriage. This is all that can be done to-day. To-morrow will bring with it events of greater interest—for to-morrow the doctor is to make his Declaration before the magistrate, and to-morrow I am to move to my new lodging in my widow's weeds.

"November 27th.—Fairweather Vale Villas.—The Declaration has been made, with all the necessary formalities. And I have taken possession, in my widow's costume, of my new rooms.

"I ought to be excited by the opening of this new act in the drama, and by the venturesome part that I am playing in it myself. Strange to say, I am quiet and depressed. The thought of Midwinter has followed me to my new abode, and is pressing on me heavily at this moment. I have no fear of any accident happening, in the interval that must still pass before I step publicly into the place of Armadale's widow. But when that time comes, and when Midwinter finds me (as sooner or later find me he must!) figuring in my false character, and settled in the position that I have usurped—*then*, I ask myself, What will happen? The answer still comes as it first came to me this morning, when I put on my widow's dress. Now, as then, the presentiment is fixed in my mind that he will kill me. If it was not too late to draw back—— Absurd! I shall shut up my journal.

"November 28th.—The lawyers have heard from Mr. Daron, and have sent him the Declaration by return of post.

"When the doctor brought me this news, I asked him whether his lawyers were aware of my present address; and, finding that he had not yet mentioned it to them, I begged that he would continue to keep it a secret for the future. The doctor laughed. 'Are you afraid of Mr. Darch's stealing a march on us, and coming to attack you personally?' he asked. I accepted the imputation, as the easiest way of making him comply with my request. 'Yes,' I said, 'I am afraid of Mr. Darch.'

"My spirits have risen since the doctor left me. There is a pleasant sensation of security in feeling that no strangers are in possession of my address. I am easy enough in my mind to-day to notice how wonderfully well I look in my widow's weeds, and to make myself agreeable to the people of the house.

"Midwinter disturbed me a little again last night; but I have got over the ghastly delusion which possessed me yesterday. I know better now than to dread violence from him when he discovers what I have done. And there is still less fear of his stooping to assert his claim to a woman who has practised on him such a deception as mine. The one serious trial that I shall be put to when the day of reckoning comes, will be the trial of preserving my false character in his presence. I shall be safe in his loathing and contempt for me, after that. On the day when I have denied him to his face, I shall have seen the last of him for ever.

"Shall I be able to deny him to his face? Shall I be able to look at him and speak to him as if he had never been more to me than a friend? How do I know till the time comes! Was there ever such an infatuated fool as I am, to be writing of him at all, when writing only encourages me to think of him? I will make a new resolution. From this time forth his name shall appear no more in these pages.

"*Monday, December 1st.*—The last month of the worn-out old year, eighteen hundred and fifty-one! If I allowed myself to look back, what a miserable year I should see added to all the other miserable years that are gone! But I have made my resolution to look forward only, and I mean to keep it.

"I have nothing to record of the last two days, except that on the twenty-ninth I remembered Bashwood, and wrote to tell him of my new address. This morning the lawyers heard again from Mr. Darch. He acknowledges the receipt of the Declaration, but postpones stating the decision at which he has arrived until he has communicated with the trustees under the late Mr. Blanchard's will, and has received his final instructions from his client, Miss Blanchard. The doctor's lawyers declare that this last letter is a mere device for gaining time—with what object they are of course not in a position to guess. The doctor himself says, facetiously, it is the usual lawyer's object of making a long bill. My own idea is that Mr. Darch has his suspicions of something wrong, and that his purpose in trying to gain time——

* * * * *

"*Ten, at night.*—I had written as far as that last unfinished sentence (towards four in the afternoon) when I was startled by hearing a cab drive up to the door. I went to the window, and got there just in time to see old Bashwood getting out with an activity of which I should never have supposed him capable. So little did I anticipate the tremendous discovery that was going to burst on me in another minute, that I turned to the glass, and wondered what the susceptible old gentleman would say to me in my widow's cap.

"The instant he entered the room, I saw that some serious disaster had happened. His eyes were wild, his wig was awry. He approached me with a strange mixture of eagerness and dismay. 'I've done as you told me,' he whispered breathlessly. 'I've held my tongue about it, and come straight to you!' He caught me by the hand before I could speak, with a boldness quite new in my experience of him? 'Oh, how can I break it to you!' he burst out. 'I'm beside myself when I think of it!'

"'When you can speak,' I said, putting him into a chair, 'speak out. I see in your face that you bring me news I don't look for from Thorpe-Ambrose.'

"He put his hand into the breast-pocket of his coat, and drew out a letter. He looked at the letter, and looked at me. 'New-news you don't look for,' he stammered; 'but not from Thorpe-Ambrose!'

" 'Not from Thorpe-Ambrose!'

" 'No. From the sea!'

"The first dawning of the truth broke on me at those words. I couldn't speak—I could only hold out my hand to him for the letter.

"He still shrank from giving it to me. 'I daren't! I daren't!' he said to himself vacantly. 'The shock of it might be the death of her.'

"I snatched the letter from him. One glance at the writing on the address was enough. My hands fell on my lap, with the letter fast held in them. I sat petrified, without moving, without speaking, without hearing a word of what Bashwood was saying to me, and slowly realized the terrible truth. The man whose widow I had claimed to be, was a living man to confront me! In vain I had mixed the drink at Naples—in vain I had betrayed him into Manuel's hands. Twice I had set the deadly snare for him, and twice Armadale had escaped me!

"I came to my sense of outward things again, and found Bashwood on his knees at my feet, crying.

" 'You look angry,' he murmured helplessly. 'Are you angry with me? Oh, if you only knew what hopes I had when we last saw each other, and how cruelly that letter has dashed them all to the ground!'

"I put the miserable old creature back from me—but very gently. 'Hush!' I said. 'Don't distress me now. I want composure—I want to read the letter.'

"He went away submissively to the other end of the room. As soon as my eye was off him, I heard him say to himself, with impotent malignity, 'If the sea had been of my mind, the sea would have drowned him!'

"One by one, I slowly opened the folds of the letter; feeling, while I did so, the strangest incapability of fixing my attention on the very lines that I was burning to read. But why dwell any longer on sensations which I can't describe? It will be more to the purpose if I place the letter itself, for future reference, on this page of my journal.

"MR. BASHWOOD,

"Fiume, Illyria, November 21st, 1851.

"THE address I date from will surprise you—and you will be more surprised still when you hear how it is that I come to write to you from a port on the Adriatic Sea.

"I have been the victim of a rascally attempt at robbery and murder. The robbery has succeeded; and it is only through the mercy of God that the murder did not succeed too.

"I hired a yacht rather more than a month ago at Naples; and sailed (I am glad to think now) without any friend with me, for Messina. From Messina I went for a cruise in the Adriatic. Two days out, we were caught in a storm. Storms get up in a hurry, and go down in a hurry, in those parts. The vessel behaved nobly—I declare I feel the tears in my eyes now, when I think of her at the bottom of the sea! Towards sunset it began to moderate; and by midnight, except for a long smooth

swell, the sea was as quiet as need be. I went below, a little tired (having helped in working the yacht while the gale lasted), and fell asleep in five minutes. About two hours after, I was woke by something falling into my cabin through a chink of the ventilator in the upper part of the door. I jumped up, and found a bit of paper with a key wrapped in it, and with writing on the inner side, in a hand which it was not very easy to read.

"Up to this time I had not had the ghost of a suspicion that I was alone at sea with a gang of murderous vagabonds (excepting one only) who would stick at nothing. I had got on very well with my sailing-master (the worst scoundrel of the lot), and better still with his English mate. The sailors being all foreigners, I had very little to say to. They did their work, and no quarrels and nothing unpleasant happened. If anybody had told me, before I went to bed on the night after the storm, that the sailing-master and the crew and the mate (who had been no better than the rest of them at starting) were all in a conspiracy to rob me of the money I had on board, and then to drown me in my own vessel afterwards, I should have laughed in his face. Just remember that; and then fancy for yourself (for I'm sure I can't tell you) what I must have thought when I opened the paper round the key, and read what I now copy (from the mate's writing) as follows:—

"‘SIR,—Stay in your bed till you hear a boat shove off from the starboard side—or you are a dead man. Your money is stolen; and in five minutes' time the yacht will be scuttled, and the cabin-hatch will be nailed down on you. Dead men tell no tales—and the sailing-master's notion is to leave proofs afloat that the vessel has foundered with all on board. It was his doing to begin with, and we were all in it. I can't find it in my heart not to give you a chance for your life. It's a bad chance, but I can do no more. I should be murdered myself if I didn't seem to go with the rest. The key of your cabin-door is thrown back to you, inside this. Don't be alarmed when you hear the hammer above. I shall do it, and I shall have short nails in my hand as well as long, and use the short ones only. Wait till you hear the boat with all of us shove off, and then prize up the cabin-hatch with your back. The vessel will float a quarter of an hour after the holes are bored in her. Slip into the sea on the port side, and keep the vessel between you and the boat. You will find plenty of loose lumber, wrenched away on purpose, drifting about to hold on by. It's a fine night and a smooth sea, and there's a chance that a ship may pick you up while there's life left in you. I can do no more.—Yours truly, J. M.’

"As I came to those last words, I heard the hammering down of the hatch over my head. I don't suppose I'm more of a coward than most people—but there was a moment when the sweat poured down me like rain. I got to be my own man again, before the hammering was done, and found myself thinking of somebody very dear to me in England. I said to myself, ‘I'll have a try for my life, for her sake, though the chances are dead against me.’

"I put a letter from that person I have mentioned into one of the stoppered bottles of my dressing-case—along with the mate's warning, in case I lived to see him again. I hung this, and a flask of whisky, in a sling round my neck—and, after first dressing myself in my confusion, thought better of it, and stripped again, for swimming, to my shirt and

drawers. By the time I had done that, the hammering was over, and there was such a silence that I could hear the water bubbling into the scuttled vessel amidships. The next noise was the noise of the boat and the villains in her (always excepting my friend the mate) shoving off from the starboard side. I waited for the splash of the oars in the water, and then got my back under the hatch. The mate had kept his promise. I lifted it easily—crept across the deck, under cover of the bulwarks, on all fours—and slipped into the sea on the port side. Lots of things were floating about. I took the first thing I came to—a hencoop—and swam away with it about a couple of hundred yards, keeping the yacht between me and the boat. Having got that distance, I was seized with a shivering fit, and I stopped (fearing the cramp next) to take a pull at my flask. When I had closed the flask again, I turned for a moment to look back, and saw the yacht in the act of sinking. In a minute more there was nothing between me and the boat, but the pieces of wreck that had been purposely thrown out to float. The moon was shining; and, if they had had a glass in the boat, I believe they might have seen my head, though I carefully kept the hencoop between me and them.

"As it was, they laid on their oars; and I heard loud voices among them disputing. After what seemed an age to me, I discovered what the dispute was about. The boat's head was suddenly turned my way. Some cleverer scoundrel than the rest (the sailing-master, I daresay,) had evidently persuaded them to row back over the place where the yacht had gone down, and make quite sure that I had gone down with her.

"They were more than half way across the distance that separated us, and I had given myself up for lost, when I heard a cry from one of them, and saw the boat's progress suddenly checked. In a minute or two more, the boat's head was turned again; and they rowed straight away from me like men rowing for their lives.

"I looked on one side, towards the land, and saw nothing. I looked on the other, towards the sea, and discovered what the boat's crew had discovered before me—a sail in the distance, growing steadily brighter and bigger in the moonlight the longer I looked at it. In a quarter of an hour more the vessel was within hail of me, and the crew had got me on board.

"They were all foreigners, and they quite deafened me by their jabber. I tried signs, but before I could make them understand me, I was seized with another shivering fit, and was carried below. The vessel held on her course, I have no doubt, but I was in no condition to know anything about it. Before morning, I was in a fever; and from that time I can remember nothing clearly till I came to my senses at this place, and found myself under the care of a Hungarian merchant, the consignee (as they call it) of the coasting vessel that had picked me up. He speaks English as well or better than I do; and he has treated me with a kindness which I can find no words to praise. When he was a young man he was in England himself, learning business, and he says he has remembrances of

our country which make his heart warm towards an Englishman. He has fitted me out with clothes, and has lent me the money to travel with, as soon as the doctor allows me to start for home. Supposing I don't get a relapse, I shall be fit to travel in a week's time from this. If I can catch the mail at Trieste, and stand the fatigue, I shall be back again at Thorpe-Ambrose in a week or ten days at most after you get my letter. You will agree with me that it is a terribly long letter. But I can't help that. I seem to have lost my old knack at putting things short, and finishing on the first page. However, I am near the end now—for I have nothing left to mention but the reason why I write about what has happened to me, instead of waiting till I get home, and telling it all by word of mouth.

"I fancy my head is still muddled by my illness. At any rate, it only struck me this morning that there is barely a chance of some vessel having passed the place where the yacht foundered, and having picked up the furniture, and other things wrenched out of her and left to float. Some false report of my being drowned may, in that case, have reached England. If this has happened (which I hope to God may be an unfounded fear on my part), go directly to Major Milroy at the cottage. Show him this letter—I have written it quite as much for his eye as for yours—and then give him the enclosed note, and ask him if he doesn't think the circumstances justify me in hoping he will send it to Miss Milroy. I can't explain why I don't write directly to the major, or to Miss Milroy, instead of to you. I can only say there are considerations I am bound in honour to respect, which oblige me to act in this roundabout way.

"I don't ask you to answer this—for I shall be on my way home, I hope, long before your letter could reach me in this out-of-the-way place. Whatever you do, don't lose a moment in going to Major Milroy. Go, on second thoughts, whether the loss of the yacht is known in England or not.

"Yours truly,

"ALLAN ARMADALE."

"I looked up when I had come to the end of the letter, and saw, for the first time, that Bashwood had left his chair, and had placed himself opposite to me. He was intently studying my face, with the inquiring expression of a man who was trying to read my thoughts. His eyes fell guiltily when they met mine, and he shrank away to his chair. Believing, as he did, that I was really married to Armadale, was he trying to discover whether the news of Armadale's rescue from the sea was good news or bad news, in my estimation? It was no time then for entering into explanations with him. The first thing to be done was to communicate instantly with the doctor. I called Bashwood back to me, and gave him my hand.

"'You have done me a service,' I said, 'which makes us closer friends than ever. I shall say more about this, and about other matters of some interest to both of us, later in the day. I want you now to lend

me Mr. Armadale's letter (which I promise to bring back) and to wait here till I return. Will you do that for me, Mr. Bashwood ?'

"He would do anything I asked him, he said. I went into the bedroom, and put on my bonnet and shawl.

" 'Let me be quite sure of the facts before I leave you,' I resumed, when I was ready to go out. 'You have not shown this letter to anybody but me ?'

" 'Not a living soul has seen it but our two selves.'

" 'What have you done with the note enclosed to Miss Milroy ?'

"He produced it from his pocket. I ran it over rapidly—saw that there was nothing in it of the slightest importance—and put it in the fire on the spot. That done, I left Bashwood in the sitting-room, and went to the Sanatorium, with Armadale's letter in my hand.

"The doctor had gone out ; and the servant was unable to say positively at what time he would be back. I went into his study, and wrote a line preparing him for the news I had brought with me, which I sealed up, with Armadale's letter, in an envelope, to await his return. That done, I told the servant I would call again in an hour, and left the place.

"It was useless to go back to my lodgings and speak to Bashwood, until I knew first what the doctor meant to do. I walked about the neighbourhood, up and down new streets and crescents and squares, with a kind of dull, numbed feeling in me, which prevented, not only all voluntary exercise of thought, but all sensation of bodily fatigue. I remembered the same feeling overpowering me, years ago, on the morning when the people of the prison came to take me into court to be tried for my life. All that frightful scene came back again to my mind, in the strangest manner, as if it had been a scene in which some other person had figured. Once or twice I wondered, in a heavy senseless way, why they had not hanged me !

"When I went back to the Sanatorium, I was informed that the doctor had returned half-an-hour since, and that he was in his own room anxiously waiting to see me.

"I went into the study, and found him sitting close by the fire, with his head down, and his hands on his knees. On the table near him, besides Armadale's letter and my note, I saw, in the little circle of light thrown by the reading-lamp, an open railway guide. Was he meditating flight ? It was impossible to tell from his face, when he looked up at me, what he was meditating, or how the shock had struck him when he first discovered that Armadale was a living man.

" 'Take a seat near the fire,' he said. 'It's very raw and cold to-day.'

"I took a chair in silence. In silence, on his side, the doctor sat rubbing his knees before the fire.

" 'Have you nothing to say to me ?' I asked.

"He rose, and suddenly removed the shade from the reading-lamp so that the light fell on my face.

"'You are not looking well,' he said. 'What's the matter?'

"'My head feels dull, and my eyes are heavy and hot,' I replied. 'The weather, I suppose.'

"It was strange how we both got farther and farther from the one vitally important subject which we had both come together to discuss!

"'I think a cup of tea would do you good,' remarked the doctor.

"I accepted his suggestion; and he ordered the tea. While it was coming, he walked up and down the room, and I sat by the fire—and not a word passed between us on either side.

"The tea revived me; and the doctor noticed a change for the better in my face. He sat down opposite to me at the table, and spoke out at last.

"'If I had ten thousand pounds at this moment,' he began, 'I would give the whole of it never to have compromised myself in your desperate speculation on Mr. Armadale's death!'

"He said those words with an abruptness, almost with a violence, which was strangely uncharacteristic of his ordinary manner. Was he frightened himself, or was he trying to frighten me? I determined to make him explain himself at the outset, so far as I was concerned. 'Wait a moment, doctor,' I said. 'Do you hold me responsible for what has happened?'

"'Certainly not,' he replied, stiffly. 'Neither you nor anybody could have foreseen what has happened. When I say I would give ten thousand pounds to be out of this business, I am blaming nobody but myself. And when I tell you next, that I, for one, won't allow Mr. Armadale's resurrection from the sea to be the ruin of me without a fight for it, I tell you, my dear madam, one of the plainest truths I ever told to man or woman, in the whole course of my life. Don't suppose I am invidiously separating my interests from yours, in the common danger that now threatens us both. I simply indicate the difference in the risk that we have respectively run. *You* have not sunk the whole of your resources in establishing a Sanatorium; and *you* have not made a false declaration before a magistrate, which is punishable as perjury by the law.'

"I interrupted him again. His selfishness did me more good than his tea—it roused my temper effectually. 'Suppose we let your risk and my risk alone, and come to the point,' I said. 'What do you mean by making a fight for it? I see a railway guide on your table. Does making a fight for it, mean—running away?'

"'Running-away?' repeated the doctor. 'You appear to forget that every farthing I have in the world is embarked in this establishment.'

"'You stop here then?' I said.

"'Unquestionably!'

"'And what do you mean to do when Mr. Armadale comes to England?'

"A solitary fly, the last of his race whom the winter had spared, was buzzing feebly about the doctor's face. He caught it before he answered me, and held it out across the table in his closed hand.

" 'If this fly's name was Armadale,' he said, 'and if you had got him as I have got him now, what would you do?'

"His eyes, fixed on my face up to this time, turned significantly, as he ended his question, to my widow's dress. I, too, looked at it when he looked. A thrill of the old deadly hatred, and the old deadly determination, ran through me again.

" 'I should kill him,' I said.

"The doctor started to his feet (with the fly still in his hand), and looked at me—a little too theatrically—with an expression of the utmost horror.

" 'Kill him ! ' repeated the doctor in a paroxysm of virtuous alarm. 'Violence—murderous violence—in My Sanatorium ! You take my breath away !'

"I caught his eye, while he was expressing himself in this elaborately indignant manner, scrutinizing me with a searching curiosity which was, to say the least of it, a little at variance with the vehemence of his language and the warmth of his tone. He laughed uneasily, when our eyes met, and recovered his smoothly confidential manner in the instant that elapsed before he spoke again.

" 'I beg a thousand pardons,' he said. 'I ought to have known better than to take a lady too literally at her word. Permit me to remind you, however, that the circumstances are too serious for anything in the nature of—let us say, an exaggeration or a joke. You shall hear what I propose, without further preface.' He paused, and resumed his figurative use of the fly imprisoned in his hand. 'Here is Mr. Armadale. I can let him out, or keep him in, just as I please—and he knows it. I say to him,' continued the doctor, facetiously addressing the fly, 'Give me proper security, Mr. Armadale, that no proceedings of any sort shall be taken against either this lady or myself, and I will let you out of the hollow of my hand. Refuse—and be the risk what it may, I will keep you in.' Can you doubt, my dear madam, what Mr. Armadale's answer is, sooner or later, certain to be? Can you doubt,' said the doctor, suiting the action to the word, and letting the fly go, 'that it will end to the entire satisfaction of all parties, in this way?'

" 'I won't say at present,' I answered, 'whether I doubt or not. Let me make sure that I understand you first. You propose, if I am not mistaken, to shut the doors of this place on Mr. Armadale, and not to let him out again, until he has agreed to the terms which it is our interest to impose on him? May I ask, in that case, how you mean to make him walk into the trap that you have set for him here?'

" 'I propose,' said the doctor, with his hand on the railway guide, 'ascertaining first, at what time during every evening of this month the tidal trains from Dover and Folkestone reach the London Bridge terminus. And I propose next, posting a person whom Mr. Armadale knows, and whom you and I can trust, to wait the arrival of the trains, and to meet our man at the moment when he steps out of the railway carriage.'

“ ‘Have you thought,’ I inquired, ‘of who the person is to be?’ ”

“ ‘I have thought,’ said the doctor, taking up Armadale’s letter, ‘of the person to whom this letter is addressed.’ ”

“The answer startled me. Was it possible that he and Bashwood knew one another? I put the question immediately.

“ ‘Until to-day, I never so much as heard of the gentleman’s name,’ said the doctor. ‘I have simply pursued the inductive process of reasoning, for which we are indebted to the immortal Bacon. How does this very important letter come into your possession? I can’t insult you by supposing it to have been stolen. Consequently, it has come to you with the leave and licence of the person to whom it is addressed. Consequently, that person is in your confidence. Consequently, he is the first person I think of. You see the process? Very good. Permit me a question or two, on the subject of Mr. Bashwood, before we go on any further.’ ”

“The doctor’s questions went as straight to the point as usual. My answers informed him that Mr. Bashwood stood towards Armadale in the relation of steward—that he had received the letter at Thorpe-Ambrose that morning, and had brought it straight to me by the first train—that he had not shown it, or spoken of it before leaving, to Major Milroy or to any one else—that I had not obtained this service at his hands by trusting him with my secret—that I had communicated with him in the character of Armadale’s widow—that he had suppressed the letter, under those circumstances, solely in obedience to a general caution I had given him, to keep his own counsel if anything strange happened at Thorpe-Ambrose, until he had first consulted me—and lastly, that the reason why he had done as I told him, in this matter, was, that in this matter, and in all others, Mr. Bashwood was blindly devoted to my interests.

“At that point in the interrogatory, the doctor’s eyes began to look at me distrustfully, behind the doctor’s spectacles.

“ ‘What is the secret of this blind devotion of Mr. Bashwood’s to your interests?’ he asked.

“I hesitated for a moment—in pity to Bashwood, not in pity to myself. ‘If you must know,’ I answered, ‘Mr. Bashwood is in love with me.’ ”

“ ‘Ay! ay!’ exclaimed the doctor, with an air of relief. ‘I begin to understand now. Is he a young man?’ ”

“ ‘He is an old man.’ ”

“The doctor laid himself back in his chair, and chuckled softly. ‘Better and better!’ he said. ‘Here is the very man we want. Who so fit as Mr. Armadale’s steward to meet Mr. Armadale on his return to London. And who so capable of influencing Mr. Bashwood in the proper way as the charming object of Mr. Bashwood’s admiration?’ ”

“There could be no doubt that Bashwood was the man to serve the doctor’s purpose, and that my influence was to be trusted to make him serve it. (The difficulty was not here,—the difficulty was in the unanswered question that I had put to the doctor a minute since. I put it to him again.

"Suppose Mr. Armadale's steward meets his employer at the terminus,' I said. 'May I ask once more how Mr. Armadale is to be persuaded to come here?'

"Don't think me ungallant,' rejoined the doctor in his gentlest manner, 'if I ask, on my side, how are men persuaded to do nine-tenths of the foolish acts of their lives? They are persuaded by your charming sex. The weak side of every man is the woman's side of him. We have only to discover the woman's side of Mr. Armadale—to tickle him on it gently—and to lead him our way with a silken string. I observe here,' pursued the doctor, opening Armadale's letter, 'a reference to a certain young lady, which looks promising. Where is the note that Mr. Armadale speaks of as addressed to Miss Milroy?'

"Instead of answering him, I started, in a sudden burst of excitement, to my feet. The instant he mentioned Miss Milroy's name, all that I had heard from Bashwood of her illness, and of the cause of it, rushed back into my memory. I saw the means of decoying Armadale into the Sanatorium, as plainly as I saw the doctor on the other side of the table, wondering at the extraordinary change in me. What a luxury it was to make Miss Milroy serve my interests at last!

"Never mind the note,' I said. 'It's burnt, for fear of accidents. I can tell you all (and more) than the note could have told you. Miss Milroy cuts the knot! Miss Milroy ends the difficulty! She is privately engaged to him. She has heard the false report of his death; and she has been seriously ill at Thorpe-Ambrose ever since. When Bashwood meets him at the station, the very first question he is certain to ask——'

"I see!' exclaimed the doctor, anticipating me. 'Mr. Bashwood has nothing to do but to help the truth with a touch of fiction. When he tells his master that the false report has reached Miss Milroy, he has only to add that the shock has affected her head, and that she is here under medical care. Perfect! perfect! We shall have him at the Sanatorium as fast as the fastest cab-horse in London can bring him to us. And mind! no risk—no necessity for trusting other people. This is not a madhouse; this is not a Licensed Establishment—no doctors' certificates are necessary here! My dear lady, I congratulate you; I congratulate myself. Permit me to hand you the railway guide, with my best compliments to Mr. Bashwood, and with the page turned down for him, as an additional attention, at the right place.'

"Remembering how long I had kept Bashwood waiting for me, I took the book at once, and wished the doctor good evening without further ceremony. As he politely opened the door for me, he reverted, without the slightest necessity for doing so, and without a word from me to lead to it, to the outburst of virtuous alarm which had escaped him at the earlier part of our interview.

"I do hope,' he said, 'that you will kindly forget and forgive my extraordinary want of tact and perspicuity when—in short, when I suggest

the fly. I positively blush at my own stupidity in putting a literal interpretation on a lady's little joke! 'Violence in My Sanatorium!' exclaimed the doctor, with his eyes once more fixed attentively on my face, 'violence in this enlightened nineteenth century! Was there ever anything so ridiculous? Do fasten your cloak before you go out—it is so cold and raw! Shall I escort you? Shall I send my servant? Ah, you were always independent! always, if I may say so, a host in yourself! May I call to-morrow morning, and hear what you have settled with Mr. Bashwood?'

"I said yes, and got away from him at last. In a quarter of an hour more I was back at my lodgings, and was informed by the servant that 'the elderly gentleman' was still waiting for me.

"I have not got the heart, or the patience—I hardly know which—to waste many words on what passed between me and Bashwood. It was so easy, so degradingly easy, to pull the strings of the poor old puppet in any way I pleased! I met none of the difficulties which I should have been obliged to meet in the case of a younger man, or of a man less infatuated with admiration for me. I left the allusions to Miss Milroy in Armadale's letter, which had naturally puzzled him, to be explained at a future time. I never even troubled myself to invent a plausible reason for wishing him to meet Armadale at the terminus, and to entrap him by a stratagem into the doctor's Sanatorium. All that I found it necessary to do was to refer to what I had written to Mr. Bashwood, on my arrival in London, and to what I had afterwards said to him, when he came to answer my letter personally at the hotel.

"'You know already,' I said, 'that my marriage has not been a happy one. Draw your own conclusions from that—and don't press me to tell you whether the news of Mr. Armadale's rescue from the sea is, or is not, the welcome news that it ought to be to his wife!' That was enough to put his withered old face in a glow, and to set his withered old hopes growing again. I had only to add, 'If you will do what I ask you to do, no matter how incomprehensible and how mysterious my request may seem to be; and if you will accept my assurances that you shall run no risk yourself, and that you shall receive the proper explanations at the proper time—you will have such a claim on my gratitude and my regard as no man living has ever had yet!' I had only to say those words, and to point them by a look and a stolen pressure of his hand; and I had him at my feet, blindly eager to obey me. If he could have seen what I thought of myself—but that doesn't matter: he saw nothing.

"Hours have passed since I sent him away (pledged to secrecy, possessed of his instructions, and provided with his time-table) to the hotel near the terminus, at which he is to stay till Armadale appears on the railway platform. The excitement of the earlier part of the evening has all worn off; and the dull, numbed sensation has got me again. Are my energies wearing out, I wonder, just at the time when I most want them?

Or is some foreshadowing of disaster creeping over me which I don't yet understand?

"I might be in a humour to sit here for some time longer, thinking thoughts like these, and letting them find their way into words at their own will and pleasure—if my Diary would only let me. But my idle pen has been busy enough to make its way to the end of the volume. I have reached the last morsel of space left on the last page; and whether I like it or not, I must close the book this time for good and all, when I close it to-night.

"Good-by, my old friend and companion of many a miserable day! Having nothing else to be fond of, I half suspect myself of having been unreasonably fond of *you*.

"What a fool I am!"

THE END OF THE FIFTH BOOK.

BOOK THE LAST.

CHAPTER I.

AT THE TERMINUS.

ON the night of the second of December, Mr. Bashwood took up his post of observation at the terminus of the South Eastern Railway for the first time. It was an earlier date, by six days, than the date which Allan had himself fixed for his return. But the doctor, taking counsel of his medical experience, had considered it just probable that "Mr. Armadale might be perverse enough, at his enviable age, to recover sooner than his medical advisers might have anticipated." For caution's sake, therefore, Mr. Bashwood was instructed to begin watching the arrival of the tidal trains, on the day after he had received his employer's letter.

From the second to the seventh of December, the steward waited punctually on the platform, saw the trains come in, and satisfied himself, evening after evening, that the travellers were all strangers to him. From the second to the seventh of December, Miss Gwilt (to return to the name under which she is best known in these pages) received his daily report, sometimes delivered personally, sometimes sent by letter. The doctor, to whom the reports were communicated, received them in his turn with unabated confidence in the precautions that had been adopted, up to the morning of the eighth. On that date, the irritation of continued suspense had produced a change for the worse in Miss Gwilt's variable temper, which was perceptible to every one about her, and which, strangely enough, was reflected by an equally marked change in the doctor's manner.

when he came to pay his usual visit. By a coincidence so extraordinary, that his enemies might have suspected it of not being a coincidence at all, the morning on which Miss Gwilt lost her patience, proved to be also the morning on which the doctor lost his confidence for the first time.

"No news, of course," he said, sitting down with a heavy sigh. "Well! well!"

Miss Gwilt looked up at him irritably, from her work.

"You seem strangely depressed this morning," she said. "What are you afraid of now?"

"The imputation of being afraid, madam," answered the doctor, solemnly, "is not an imputation to cast rashly on any man—even when he belongs to such an essentially peaceful profession as mine. I am not afraid. I am (as you more correctly put it in the first instance) strangely depressed. My nature is, as you know, naturally sanguine, and I only see to-day, what, but for my habitual hopefulness, I might have seen, and ought to have seen, a week since."

Miss Gwilt impatiently threw down her work. "If words cost money," she said, "the luxury of talking would be rather an expensive luxury, in your case!"

"Which I might have seen, and ought to have seen," reiterated the doctor, without taking the slightest notice of the interruption, "a week since. To put it plainly, I feel by no means so certain as I did, that Mr. Armadale will consent, without a struggle, to the terms which it is my interest (and in a minor degree yours) to impose on him. Observe! I don't question our entrapping him successfully into the Sanatorium—I only doubt whether he will prove quite as manageable as I originally anticipated, when we have got him there. Say," remarked the doctor, raising his eyes for the first time, and fixing them in steady inquiry on Miss Gwilt; "say that he is bold, obstinate, what you please; and that he holds out—holds out for weeks together, for months together, as men in similar situations to his have held out before him. What follows? The risk of keeping him forcibly in concealment—of suppressing him, if I may so express myself—increases at compound interest, and becomes, Enormous! My house is, at this moment, virtually ready for patients. Patients may present themselves in a week's time. Patients may communicate with Mr. Armadale, or Mr. Armadale may communicate with patients. A note may be smuggled out of the house, and may reach the Commissioners in Lunacy. Even in the case of an unlicensed establishment like mine, those gentlemen—not those chartered despots in a land of liberty—have only to apply to the Lord Chancellor for an order, and to enter (by heavens, to enter My Sanatorium!) and search the house from top to bottom at a moment's notice! I don't wish to despond; I don't wish to alarm you; I don't pretend to say that the means we are taking to secure our own safety are any other than the best means at our disposal. All I ask you to do is to imagine the Commissioners in the house—and then to conceive the consequences. The consequences!" repeated the

doctor, getting sternly on his feet, and taking up his hat as if he meant to leave the room.

"Have you anything more to say?" asked Miss Gwilt.

"Have you any remarks," rejoined the doctor, "to offer on your side?"

He stood hat in hand, waiting. For a full minute the two looked at each other in silence.

Miss Gwilt spoke first.

"I think I understand you," she said, suddenly recovering her composure.

"I beg your pardon," returned the doctor, with his hand to his ear. "What did you say?"

"Nothing."

"Nothing?"

"If you happened to catch another fly this morning," said Miss Gwilt, with a bitterly sarcastic emphasis on the words, "I might be capable of shocking you by another 'little joke.'"

The doctor held up both hands, in polite deprecation, and looked as if he was beginning to recover his good humour again.

"Hard," he murmured gently, "not to have forgiven me that unlucky blunder of mine, even yet!"

"What else have you to say? I am waiting for you," said Miss Gwilt. She turned her chair to the window scornfully, and took up her work again, as she spoke.

The doctor came behind her, and put his hand on the back of her chair.

"I have a question to ask, in the first place," he said; "and a measure of necessary precaution to suggest in the second. If you will honour me with your attention, I will put the question first."

"I am listening."

"You know that Mr. Armadale is alive," pursued the doctor; "and you know that he is coming back to England. Why do you continue to wear your widow's dress?"

She answered him without an instant's hesitation, steadily going on with her work.

"Because I am of a sanguine disposition, like you. I mean to trust to the chapter of accidents to the very last. Mr. Armadale may die yet, on his way home."

"And suppose he gets home alive—what then?"

"Then there is another chance still left."

"What is it, pray?"

"He may die in your Sanatorium."

"Madam!" remonstrated the doctor in the deep bass which he reserved for his outbursts of virtuous indignation. "Wait! you spoke of the chapter of accidents," he resumed, gliding back into his softer conversational tones. "Yes! yes! of course. I understand you this time."

Even the healing art is at the mercy of accidents—even such a Sanatorium as mine is liable to be surprised by Death. Just so! just so!” said the doctor, conceding the question with the utmost impartiality. “There is the chapter of accidents, I admit—if you choose to trust to it. Mind! I say emphatically, *if* you choose to trust to it.”

There was another moment of silence—silence so profound that nothing was audible in the room but the rapid *click* of Miss Gwilt's needle through her work.

“Go on,” she said; “you haven't done yet.”

“True!” said the doctor. “Having put my question, I have my measure of precaution to impress on you next. You will see, my dear madam, that I am not disposed to trust to the chapter of accidents on my side. Reflection has convinced me that you and I are not (locally speaking) so conveniently situated as we might be, in case of emergency. Cabs are, as yet, rare in this rapidly-improving neighbourhood. I am twenty minutes' walk from you; you are twenty minutes' walk from me. I know nothing of Mr. Armadale's character; you know it well. It might be necessary—vitally necessary—to appeal to your superior knowledge of him at a moment's notice. And how am I to do that unless we are within easy reach of each other, under the same roof? In both our interests, I beg to invite you, my dear madam, to become for a limited period an inmate of My Sanatorium.”

Miss Gwilt's rapid needle suddenly stopped. “I understand you,” she said again, as quietly as before.

“I beg your pardon,” said the doctor, with another attack of deafness, and with his hand once more at his ear.

She laughed to herself—a low, terrible laugh, which startled even the doctor into taking his hand off the back of her chair.

“An inmate of your Sanatorium?” she repeated. “You consult appearances in everything else—do you propose to consult appearances in receiving me into your house?”

“Most assuredly!” replied the doctor, with enthusiasm. “I am surprised at your asking me the question! Did you ever know a man of any eminence in my profession who set appearances at defiance? If you honour me by accepting my invitation, you enter My Sanatorium in the most unimpeachable of all possible characters—in the character of a Patient.”

“When do you want my answer?”

“Can you decide to-day?”

“No.”

“To-morrow?”

“Yes. Have you anything more to say?”

“Nothing more.”

“Leave me then. I don't keep up appearances. I wish to be alone—and I say so. Good morning.”

“Oh, the sex! the sex!” said the doctor, with his excellent temper in perfect working order again. “So delightfully impulsive! so charm-

ingly reckless of what they say, or how they say it ! ‘ Oh, woman, in our hours of ease, uncertain, coy, and hard to please ! ’ There ! there ! there ! Good morning ! ”

Miss Gwilt rose and looked after him contemptuously from the window, when the street-door had closed, and he had left the house.

“ Armadale himself drove me to it the first time,” she said. “ Manuel drove me to it the second time.—You cowardly scoundrel ! shall I let *you* drive me to it for the third time and the last ? ”

She turned from the window, and looked thoughtfully at her widow’s dress in the glass.

The hours of the day passed—and she decided nothing. The night came—and she hesitated still. The new morning dawned—and the terrible question was still unanswered.

By the early post there came a letter for her. It was Mr. Bashwood’s usual report. Again he had watched for Allan’s arrival, and again in vain.

“ I’ll have more time ! ” she determined passionately. “ No man alive shall hurry me faster than I like ! ”

At breakfast that morning (the morning of the ninth) the doctor was surprised in his study by a visit from Miss Gwilt.

“ I want another day,” she said, the moment the servant had closed the door on her.

The doctor looked at her before he answered, and saw the danger of driving her to extremities plainly expressed in her face.

“ The time is getting on,” he remonstrated in his most persuasive manner. “ For all we know to the contrary, Mr. Armadale may be here to-night.”

“ I want another day ! ” she repeated, loudly and passionately.

“ Granted ! ” said the doctor, looking nervously towards the door. “ Don’t be too loud—the servants may hear you. Mind ! ” he added, “ I depend on your honour not to press me for any further delay.”

“ You had better depend on my despair,” she said—and left him.

The doctor chipped the shell of his egg, and laughed softly.

“ Quite right, my dear ! ” he thought. “ I remember where your despair led you in past times ; and I think I may trust it to lead you the same way now.”

At a quarter to eight o’clock that night, Mr. Bashwood took up his post of observation as usual on the platform of the terminus at London Bridge.

He was in the highest good spirits ; he smiled and smirked in irrepressible exultation. The sense that he held in reserve a means of influence over Miss Gwilt, in virtue of his knowledge of her past career, had had no share in effecting the transformation that now appeared in him. It had upheld his courage in his forlorn life at Thorpe-Ambrose, and it had given him that increased confidence of manner which Miss Gwilt herself had noticed ; but, from the moment when he had regained his old place in her favour, it had vanished as a motive power in him, annihilated by the

electric shock of her touch and her look. His vanity—the vanity which in men at his age is only despair in disguise—had now lifted him to the seventh heaven of fatuous happiness once more. He believed in her again as he believed in the smart new winter over-coat that he wore—as he believed in the dainty little cane (appropriate to the dawning dandyism of lads in their teens) that he flourished in his hand. He hummed! The worn-out old creature who had not sung since his childhood, hummed as he paced the platform the few fragments he could remember of a worn-out old song.

The train was due as early as eight o'clock that night. At five minutes past the hour, the whistle sounded. In less than five minutes more, the passengers were getting out on the platform.

Following the instructions that had been given to him, Mr. Bashwood made his way as well as the crowd would let him, along the line of carriages; and discovering no familiar face on that first investigation, joined the passengers for a second search among them in the custom-house waiting-room next.

He had looked round the room, and had satisfied himself that the persons occupying it were all strangers, when he heard a voice behind him, exclaiming, "Can that be Mr. Bashwood!"

He turned in eager expectation; and found himself face to face with the last man under heaven whom he had expected to see.

The man was MIDWINTER.

CHAPTER II.

IN THE HOUSE.

NOTICING Mr. Bashwood's confusion (after a moment's glance at the change in his personal appearance), Midwinter spoke first.

"I see I have surprised you," he said. "You were looking, I suppose, for somebody else? Have you heard from Allan? Is he on his way home again already?"

The inquiry about Allan, though it would naturally have suggested itself to any one in Midwinter's position at that moment, added to Mr. Bashwood's confusion. Not knowing how else to extricate himself from the critical position in which he was placed, he took refuge in simple denial.

"I know nothing about Mr. Armadale—oh dear, no, sir, I know nothing about Mr. Armadale," he answered with needless eagerness and hurry. "Welcome back to England, sir," he went on, changing the subject in his nervously talkative manner. "I didn't know you had been abroad. It's so long since we have had the pleasure—since I have had the pleasure.—Have you enjoyed yourself, sir, in foreign parts? Such different manners from ours—yes, yes, yes,—such different manners from ours! Do you make a long stay in England, now you have come back?"

"I hardly know," said Midwinter. "I have been obliged to alter

my plans, and to come to England unexpectedly." He hesitated a little ; his manner changed, and he added in lower tones, "A serious anxiety has brought me back. I can't say what my plans will be until that anxiety is set at rest."

The light of a lamp fell on his face while he spoke, and Mr. Bashwood observed, for the first time, that he looked sadly worn and changed.

"I'm sorry, sir—I'm sure I'm very sorry. If I could be of any use—" suggested Mr. Bashwood, speaking under the influence, in some degree of his nervous politeness, and in some degree of his remembrance of what Midwinter had done for him at Thorpe-Ambrose in the bygone time

Midwinter thanked him, and turned away sadly. "I am afraid you can be of no use Mr. Bashwood—but I am obliged to you for your offer, all the same." He stopped, and considered a little, "Suppose she should *not* be ill? Suppose some misfortune should have happened?" he resumed, speaking to himself, and turning again towards the steward. "If she has left her mother, some trace of her *might* be found by inquiring at Thorpe-Ambrose."

Mr. Bashwood's curiosity was instantly aroused. The whole sex was interesting to him now, for the sake of Miss Gwilt.

"A lady, sir?" he inquired. "Are you looking for a lady?"

"I am looking," said Midwinter simply, "for my wife."

"Married, sir!" exclaimed Mr. Bashwood. "Married since I last had the pleasure of seeing you! Might I take the liberty of asking——?"

Midwinter's eyes dropped uneasily to the ground.

"You knew the lady in former times," he said. "I have married Miss Gwilt."

The steward started back, as he might have started back from a loaded pistol, levelled at his head. His eyes glared as if he had suddenly lost his senses, and the nervous trembling to which he was subject shook him from head to foot.

"What's the matter?" asked Midwinter. There was no answer. "What is there so very startling," he went on, a little impatiently, "in Miss Gwilt's being my wife?"

"*Your* wife?" repeated Mr. Bashwood, helplessly. "Mrs. Armadale——!" He checked himself by a desperate effort, and said no more.

The stupor of astonishment which possessed the steward was instantly reflected in Midwinter's face. The name in which he had secretly married his wife had passed the lips of the last man in the world whom he would have dreamed of admitting into his confidence! He took Mr. Bashwood by the arm, and led him away to a quieter part of the terminus than the part of it in which they had hitherto spoken to each other.

"You referred to my wife just now," he said; "and you spoke of *Mrs. Armadale* in the same breath. What do you mean by that?"

Again there was no answer. Utterly incapable of understanding more than that he had involved himself in some serious complication which

was a complete mystery to him, Mr. Bashwood struggled to extricate himself from the grasp that was laid on him, and struggled in vain.

Midwinter sternly repeated the question. "I ask you again," he said, "what do you mean by it?"

"Nothing, sir! I give you my word of honour I meant nothing!" He felt the hand on his arm tightening its grasp; he saw, even in the obscurity of the remote corner in which they stood, that Midwinter's fiery temper was rising, and was not to be trifled with. The extremity of his danger inspired him with the one ready capacity that a timid man possesses when he is compelled by main force to face an emergency—the capacity to lie. "I only meant to say, sir," he burst out, with a desperate effort to look and speak confidently, "that Mr. Armadale would be surprised——"

"You said *Mrs.* Armadale!"

"No, sir—on my word of honour, on my sacred word of honour, you are mistaken—you are indeed! I said *Mr.* Armadale—how could I say anything else? Please to let me go, sir—I'm pressed for time. I do assure you I'm dreadfully pressed for time!"

For a moment longer Midwinter maintained his hold, and in that moment he decided what to do.

He had accurately stated his motive for returning to England as proceeding from anxiety about his wife—anxiety naturally caused (after the regular receipt of a letter from her every other, or every third day) by the sudden cessation of the correspondence between them on her side for a whole week. The first vaguely-terrible suspicion of some other reason for her silence than the reason of accident or of illness, to which he had hitherto attributed it, had struck through him like a sudden chill the instant he heard the steward associate the name of "*Mrs.* Armadale" with the idea of his wife. Little irregularities in her correspondence with him, which he had thus far only thought strange, now came back on his mind and proclaimed themselves to be suspicious as well. He had hitherto believed the reasons she had given for referring him, when he answered her letters, to no more definite address than an address at a post-office. *Now* he suspected her reasons of being excuses, for the first time. He had hitherto resolved, on reaching London, to inquire at the only place he knew of at which a clue to her could be found—the address she had given him as the address at which "her mother" lived. *Now* (with a motive which he was afraid to define even to himself, but which was strong enough to overbear every other consideration in his mind), he determined, before all things, to solve the mystery of Mr. Bashwood's familiarity with a secret, which was a marriage-secret between himself and his wife. Any direct appeal to a man of the steward's disposition, in the steward's present state of mind, would be evidently useless. The weapon of deception was, in this case, a weapon literally forced into Midwinter's hands. He let go of Mr. Bashwood's arm, and accepted Mr. Bashwood's explanation.

"I beg your pardon," he said, "I have no doubt you are right. Pray attribute my rudeness to over-anxiety and over-fatigue. I wish you good evening."

The station was by this time almost a solitude ; the passengers by the train being assembled at the examination of their luggage in the custom-house waiting-room. It was no easy matter, ostensibly to take leave of Mr. Bashwood, and really to keep him in view. But Midwinter's early life with his gipsy master had been of a nature to practise him in such stratagems as he was now compelled to adopt. He walked away towards the waiting-room by the line of empty carriages—opened the door of one of them, as if to look after something that he had left behind—and detected Mr. Bashwood making for the cab-rank on the opposite side of the platform. In an instant, Midwinter had crossed, and had passed through the long row of vehicles, so as to skirt it on the side farthest from the platform. He entered the second cab by the left-hand door, the moment after Mr. Bashwood had entered the first cab by the right-hand door. "Double your fare, whatever it is," he said to the driver, "if you keep the cab before you in view, and follow it wherever it goes." In a minute more both vehicles were on their way out of the station.

The clerk sat in his sentry-box at the gate, taking down the destinations of the cabs as they passed. Midwinter heard the man who was driving him, call out "Hampstead !" as he went by the clerk's window."

"Why did you say 'Hampstead ?' he asked when they had left the station.

"Because the man before me said 'Hampstead,' sir," answered the driver.

Over and over again, on the wearisome journey to the north-western suburb, Midwinter asked if the cab was still in sight. Over and over again, the man answered, "Right in front of us."

It was between nine and ten o'clock, when the driver pulled up his horses at last. Midwinter got out, and saw the cab before them, waiting at a house-door. As soon as he had satisfied himself that the driver was the man whom Mr. Bashwood had hired, he paid the promised reward, and dismissed his own cab.

He took a turn backwards and forwards before the door. The vaguely terrible suspicion which had risen in his mind at the terminus, had forced itself by this time into a definite form which was abhorrent to him. Without the shadow of an assignable reason for it, he found himself blindly distrusting his wife's fidelity, and blindly suspecting Mr. Bashwood of serving her in the capacity of gobetween. In sheer horror of his own morbid fancy, he determined to take down the number of the house, and the name of the street in which it stood—and then, in justice to his wife, to return at once to the address which she had given him as the address at which her mother lived. He had taken out his pocket-book, and was on his way to the corner of the street, when he observed the man who had driven Mr. Bashwood, looking at him with an expression of inquisitive

surprise. The idea of questioning the cab-driver, while he had the opportunity, instantly occurred to him. He took a half-crown from his pocket and put it into the man's ready hand.

"Has the gentleman whom you drove from the station, gone into that house?" he asked.

"Yes, sir."

"Did you hear him inquire for anybody when the door was opened?"

"He asked for a lady, sir. Mrs.——" The man hesitated. "It wasn't a common name, sir; I should know it again if I heard it."

"Was it 'Midwinter?'"

"No, sir."

"'Armadale?'"

"That's it, sir. Mrs. Armadale."

"Are you sure it was 'Mrs.' and not 'Mr.?'"

"I'm as sure as a man can be who hasn't taken any particular notice, sir."

The doubt implied in that last answer decided Midwinter to investigate the matter on the spot. He ascended the house-steps. As he raised his hand to the bell at the side of the door, the violence of his agitation mastered him physically for the moment. A strange sensation as of something leaping up from his heart to his brain, turned his head wildly giddy. He held by the house-railings, and kept his face to the air, and resolutely waited till he was steady again. Then he rang the bell.

"Is?"—he tried to ask for "Mrs. Armadale," when the maid-servant had opened the door, but not even his resolution could force the name to pass his lips,—“Is your mistress at home?” he asked.

"Yes, sir."

The girl showed him into a back parlour, and presented him to a little old lady, with an obliging manner and a bright pair of eyes.

"There is some mistake," said Midwinter. "I wished to see——" Once more he tried to utter the name, and once more he failed to force it to his lips.

"Mrs. Armadale?" suggested the little old lady, with a smile.

"Yes."

"Show the gentleman upstairs, Jenny."

The girl led the way to the drawing-room floor.

"Any name, sir?"

"No name."

Mr. Bashwood had barely completed his report of what had happened at the terminus; Mr. Bashwood's imperious mistress was still sitting speechless under the shock of the discovery that had burst on her—when the door of the room opened; and, without a word of warning to precede him, Midwinter appeared on the threshold. He took one step into the room; and mechanically pushed the door to behind him. He stood in

dead silence, and confronted his wife, with a scrutiny that was terrible in its unnatural self-possession, and that enveloped her steadily in one comprehensive look from head to foot.

In dead silence on her side, she rose from her chair. In dead silence she stood erect on the hearth-rug, and faced her husband in widow's weeds.

He took one step nearer to her and stopped again. He lifted his hand and pointed with his lean brown finger at her dress.

"What does that mean?" he asked, without losing his terrible self-possession, and without moving his outstretched hand.

At the sound of his voice, the quick rise and fall of her bosom—which had been the one outward betrayal thus far of the inner agony that tortured her—suddenly stopped. She stood impenetrably silent, breathlessly still—as if his question had struck her dead, and his pointing hand had petrified her.

He advanced one step nearer and reiterated his words, in a voice even lower and quieter than the voice in which he had spoken first.

One moment more of silence, one moment more of inaction might have been the salvation of her. But the fatal force of her character triumphed at the crisis of her destiny, and his. White and still, and haggard and old, she met the dreadful emergency with a dreadful courage, and spoke the irrevocable words which renounced him to his face.

"Mr. Midwinter," she said, in tones unnaturally hard and unnaturally clear, "our acquaintance hardly entitles you to speak to me in that manner." Those were her words. She never lifted her eyes from the ground while she spoke them. When she had done, the last faint vestige of colour in her cheeks faded out.

There was a pause. Still steadily looking at her, he set himself to fix the language she had used to him in his mind. "She calls me 'Mr. Midwinter,'" he said slowly, in a whisper. "She speaks of 'our acquaintance.'" He waited a little and looked round the room. His wandering eyes encountered Mr. Bashwood for the first time. He saw the steward standing near the fireplace, trembling, and watching him.

"I once did you a service," he said; "and you once told me you were not an ungrateful man. Are you grateful enough to answer me if I ask you something?"

He waited a little again. Mr. Bashwood still stood trembling at the fireplace, silently watching him.

"I see you looking at me," he went on. "Is there some change in me that I am not conscious of myself? Am I seeing things that *you* don't see? Am I hearing words that *you* don't hear? Am I looking or speaking like a man out of his senses?"

Again he waited, and again the silence was unbroken. His eyes began to glitter; and the savage blood that he had inherited from his mother rose dark and slow in his ashy cheeks.

"Is that woman," he asked, "the woman whom you once knew, whose name was Miss Gwilt?"

Once more his wife collected her fatal courage. Once more his wife spoke her fatal words.

"You compel me to repeat," she said, "that you are presuming on our acquaintance, and that you are forgetting what is due to me."

He turned upon her, with a savage suddenness which forced a cry of alarm from Mr. Bashwood's lips.

"Are you, or are you not My Wife?" he asked, through his set teeth.

She raised her eyes to his for the first time. Her lost spirit looked at him, steadily defiant, out of the hell of its own despair.

"I am *not* your wife," she said.

He staggered back, with his hand groping for something to hold by, like the hands of a man in the dark. He leaned heavily against the wall of the room, and looked at the woman who had slept on his bosom, and who had denied him to his face.

Mr. Bashwood stole panic-stricken to her side. "Go in there!" he whispered, trying to draw her towards the folding doors which led into the next room. "For God's sake be quick! He'll kill you!"

She put the old man back with her hand. She looked at him with a sudden irradiation of her blank face. She answered him with lips that struggled slowly into a frightful smile.

"Let him kill me," she said.

As the words passed her lips, he sprang forward from the wall, with a cry that rang through the house. The frenzy of a maddened man flashed at her from his glassy eyes, and clutched at her in his threatening hands. He came on till he was within arm's length of her—and suddenly stood still. The black flush died out of his face in the instant when he stopped. His eyelids fell, his outstretched hands wavered, and sank helpless. He dropped, as the dead drop. He lay as the dead lie, in the arms of the wife who had denied him.

She knelt on the floor, and rested his head on her knee. She caught the arm of the steward hurrying to help her, with a hand that closed round it, like a vice. "Go for a doctor," she said, "and keep the people of the house away till he comes." There was that in her eye, there was that in her voice, which would have warned any man living to obey her in silence. In silence, Mr. Bashwood submitted, and hurried out of the room.

The instant she was alone, she raised him from her knee. With both arms clasped round him, the miserable woman lifted his lifeless face to hers, and rocked him on her bosom in an agony of tenderness beyond all relief in tears, in a passion of remorse beyond all expression in words. In silence she held him to her breast, in silence she devoured his forehead, his cheeks, his lips, with kisses. Not a sound escaped her, till she heard the trampling footsteps outside, hurrying up the stairs. Then a low moan burst from her lips, as she looked her last at him, and lowered his head again to her knee, before the strangers came in.

The landlady and the steward were the first persons whom she saw

when the door was opened. The medical man (a surgeon living in the street) followed. The horror and the beauty of her face as she looked up at him absorbed the surgeon's attention for the moment, to the exclusion of everything else. She had to beckon to him, she had to point to the senseless man, before she could claim his attention for his patient and divert it from herself.

"Is he dead?" she asked.

The surgeon carried Midwinter to the sofa, and ordered the windows to be opened. "It is a fainting fit," he said; "nothing more."

At that answer her strength failed her for the first time. She drew a deep breath of relief, and leaned on the clumsy-piece for support. Mr. Bashwood was the only person present who noticed that she was overcome. He led her to the opposite end of the room, where there was an easy chair—leaving the landlady to hand the restoratives to the surgeon as they were wanted.

"Are you going to wait here till he recovers?" whispered the steward, looking towards the sofa, and trembling as he looked.

The question roused her to a sense of her position—to a knowledge of the merciless necessities which that position now forced her to confront. With a heavy sigh she looked towards the sofa, considered with herself for a moment, and answered Mr. Bashwood's inquiry by a question on her side.

"Is the cab that brought you here from the railway still at the door?"

"Yes."

"Drive at once to the gates of the Sanatorium, and wait there till I join you."

Mr. Bashwood hesitated. She lifted her eyes to his, and, with a look, sent him out of the room.

"The gentleman is coming to, ma'am," said the landlady, as the steward closed the door. "He has just breathed again."

She bowed in mute reply, rose, and considered with herself once more—looked towards the sofa for the second time—then passed through the folding-doors into her own room.

After a short lapse of time the surgeon drew back from the sofa, and motioned to the landlady to stand aside. The bodily recovery of the patient was assured. There was nothing to be done now but to wait, and let his mind slowly recall its sense of what had happened.

"Where is she?" were the first words he said to the surgeon and the landlady anxiously watching him.

The landlady knocked at the folding-doors, and received no answer. She went in, and found the room empty. A sheet of note-paper was on the dressing-table, with the doctor's fee placed on it. The paper contained these lines, evidently written in great agitation or in great haste:—"It is impossible for me to remain here to-night, after what has happened. I will return to-morrow to take away my luggage, and to pay what I owe you."

"Where is she?" Midwinter asked again, when the landlady returned alone to the drawing-room.

"Gone, sir."

"I don't believe it!"

The old lady's colour rose. "If you know her handwriting, sir," she answered, handing him the sheet of note-paper, "perhaps you may believe *that*?"

He looked at the paper. "I beg your pardon, ma'am," he said, as he handed it back. "I beg your pardon, with all my heart."

There was something in his face as he spoke those words which more than soothed the old lady's irritation—it touched her with a sudden pity for the man who had offended her. "I am afraid there is some dreadful trouble, sir, at the bottom of all this," she said simply. "Do you wish me to give any message to the lady when she comes back?"

Midwinter rose, and steadied himself for a moment against the sofa. "I will bring my own message to-morrow," he said. "I must see her before she leaves your house."

The surgeon accompanied his patient into the street. "Can I see you home?" he said, kindly. "You had better not walk, if it is far. You mustn't over-exert yourself; you mustn't catch a chill this cold night."

Midwinter took his hand and thanked him. "I have been used to hard walking and to cold nights, sir," he said; "and I am not easily worn out, even when I look so broken as I do now. If you will tell me the nearest way out of these streets, I think the quiet of the country and the quiet of the night will help me. I have something serious to do to-morrow," he added, in a lower tone; "and I can't rest or sleep till I have thought over it to-night."

The surgeon understood that he had no common man to deal with. He gave the necessary directions without any further remark, and parted with his patient at his own door.

Left by himself, Midwinter paused and looked up at the heaven in silence. The night had cleared, and the stars were out—the stars which he had first learnt to know from his gipsy master on the hill-side. For the first time his mind went back regretfully to his boyish days. "Oh, for the old life!" he thought, longingly. "I never knew till now how happy the old life was!"

He roused himself and went on towards the open country. His face darkened as he left the streets behind him and advanced into the solitude and obscurity that lay beyond.

"She has denied her husband to-night," he said. "She shall know her master to-morrow."

Old Houses.

The glory of a building is in its age and in that deep sense of voicefulness, of stern watching, of mysterious sympathy, nay, even of approval or condemnation, which we feel in walls that have long been washed by the passing waves of humanity.

RUSKIN'S *Seven Lamps*.

To have to live in a row of houses built by contract, all at the same time, and all exactly alike, in which it is impossible to tell your own dwelling, except by looking at the number on the door, has always seemed to me one of the chief objections to life in a town, and one of the most pathetic and aggravating of the minor troubles of humanity. Mr. Podsnap, or any other type of the respectable, may think me a monomaniac—perhaps I am.

I hold that by submitting to, or worse still, by rejoicing in, a tame uniformity in our domiciles, we, of our own accord, deprive ourselves of one of the highest privileges of reason, and degrade ourselves by submission to one of the necessities under which instinct labours. Bees build their cells by exact rule and predetermined angle, a mavis's nest is recognized as one all the world over, and probably has not altered by one iota in its architecture since time began. Rabbit-burrows and mole-galleries have gained nothing in their construction from the experience of hundreds of generations. To man alone is the privilege given of impressing not merely a generic or specific character, but a stamp of individual peculiarity on his home. If walls have ears, houses surely may be allowed to have faces too, and these are often very expressive ones, telling in many a case more about their owners than their own faces dare to tell, sometimes wrinkled, now painted and patched like any made-up dowager, now clean and cared for, again grimy and foul as a drunkard's cheek. Houses die too, as their masters do, and while we love to tell the tale of lives gone by, to preserve memorials of the generations that leave us so quickly, and as we often pause to see an old house tell its silent story on the painter's canvas, may we not at times linger to listen to the description of an old home by a loving pen? Not one from an architect's point of view, even were it as gorgeous and as lovingly told as that of the baronial mansion in Gilbert Scott's *Gothic Architecture*—not a glowing picture such as George Robins knew so well how to conjure up, when with mellifluous adjectives he decked out the country lot to be brought to the hammer. Such are prophetic and anticipatory of the future, not descriptive of the past. The homes I love to look back on, and the houses I want to describe, have had too long a past to hope for a future. The auld house might make in time a picturesque ruin, but could hardly by any art be described as a desirable investment for a gentleman of fortune.

A bonnie auld house it is—not a castle, not a priory; you would not even think of calling it a hall—with four sturdy walls of grey stone, hewn at the corners and lintels, harled with white mortar where the walls are rough, with high-pitched roof and over-hanging eaves, where the swallows build, and the starlings sun themselves and chatter from April to October. It stands at the mouth of the glen, just where the hillside curves are softening into the gentle waving of the strath, and on its terrace of matchless turf, seems to lean against the soft bosom of the hill behind, while the slope of the lawn in front is just sufficient to give light and air, and an occasional glimpse of the road through the valley, and beyond it the great river, and still further off, the sea. The rich old grass ripples up to the very walls, and seems to grudge to the gravelled road even its narrow strip of sand and pebbles; and the rough Highland cattle who have had it all their own way since the deer were killed, rub their long horns against the stone steps, and lazily switch their tails in sleepy noontides before the door. But for the steps they might go in, and now and then a lamb does frisk up and invade the hall, for, winter and summer, from sunrise to sunset, the door stands ever open: what though snow may drift in, and inner doors may slam, and tramps may peer about, it is the custom of the house; and though there are now no bairns to toddle in and out, and few dogs to guard the hall, the old laird will have it open as of old. Yes, of old, that is the refrain which echoes through the house—of old: all about it seems to tell of the past rather than of the future, or even of the present. There is nothing new about the place. The house itself, though it has sheltered only some six generations, and is as solid as when it was built (for there was no building by contract in those days), is but the south front of a quadrangle far older than itself. The trees are all old, many patriarchal, and have to pay their tribute of creaking stiff old limbs, and broken branches, every windy night. The flower-garden is old-fashioned, with high box hedges, and a sundial which the ivy has cracked, so that it is half-an-hour too slow by railway time, and straight formal gravel walks where the peacocks used to strut and scream, before the home-farm was given up and the hen-house dismantled. The family acres have diminished in every generation of late. Farm after farm has been sold, but the last was the hardest of all for the laird to part with, lying, as it does, broad and fair on an upland slope, before the windows, hardly a mile off: it was sold, but not it all: one corner, deeply shaded by swaying poplars and black firs, holds four walls and a heavy iron door. This is the Cave of Machpelah, the one rood of ground that must be kept, though all else go—the burying-ground, now nearly full, just one corner empty, by his wife's grave, the place they chose fifty years ago when their first baby died.

But, says Dives, it is their own fault if they get poorer every year; why don't they make money as I do, or if they are not clever enough for that, why don't they save, and at least live within their income? But how can we blame, though we may pity the falling house. An old-fashioned, open-handed hospitality, a gentleness that could not drive a

bargain, or dismiss an old tenant, were all possible and warrantable when wheat was at war prices, and the corn-laws were intact ; but low prices, and the girls' portions, and the boys' commissions gradually do their work : a few thousands to-day, a few more to-morrow—the old acres must bear them all, and while so much is going out there is nothing coming in : the boys will not go into business, and will not look at the professions, but wherever for hundreds of years their country's flag has been flying, there they are to be found shedding their blood like water. At Quebec and Bunker's Hill, Seringapatam, Peninsula, Waterloo, Crimea, Delhi, the Peiho, the vision of the old house and the beech avenue has been the last to pass before the eyes of one of its boys, before the teeth were set for the onset, or when all else was fading from the dying eyes in the shock of battle. And then some morning at breakfast the letter comes, written by a comrade at the camp-fire to anticipate the Gazette and break the news, and by the time his medal and sword have come home the old house, in losing a hope, has gained another noble memory.

Yet, notwithstanding its poverty, is it not wonderful how well and home-like the old place looks? The park has been divided into enclosures, and fat cattle stalk solemnly along, and Cheviots and South-downs nibble the short grass, where once the deer hid in brushwood and bracken and the hare sheltered behind the tufted bent. Still the hedgerows are very lovely, bright with the fresh green in May, pale in June with delicate stars of hawthorn, blushing with the " briar roses faint and pale " all the summer through, and even far on into the autumn, crested with the bloom and rich red berries of the honeysuckle. And though the cattle have nibbled the leaves and barked the twigs as high as they can reach, and thus the lovely sweep in which the lower branches should stoop to the grass is gone, not one of the old beeches has fallen to the axe. No, even when old Lord Hunques foreclosed the mortgage, and money was so hard to get, the laird would not cut a stick of timber ; just as soon would he have sold one of his children. Thus the avenue has a beauty of its own, lined though it be by rough post-and-rail paling, for the beeches are two hundred years old, and meet overhead in living arches of whispering leaves, and the cushats coo among the branches as if echoing the refrain of the angels' song ; and though the gates are heavy and their hinges stiff, the gate-posts are rich with strange old carving, and piled with mosses, and fretted with lichens into arabesques of infinite delicacy and variety, glittering in sunlight and glowing in shade, as no colours of man's devising do.

Very refreshing, too, is the contrast between the coolness and cloister-shade of the beeches, and the sunlight of the nearer lawn, which bursts upon us, sudden and glorious, as we pass the great stone pillars of the second gate. For the oaks and elms no longer shade the road, but stand apart, now one giant alone, again in two's and three's, leaving long reaches of grass between them, green in the shade, yellow—almost white—in the summer sun ; and now between the tree-trunks we get a glint of the house, and feel we are really at home : the post-boy gives a final chirrup to the

weary hacks, a cool plunge into a grove of limes, heavy with scent, and vibrating with the wings of countless bees, a terrace of short grass, thick with sweet white clover—ah! we are at the door, or more correctly, at the stair, for the entrance hall and most of the public rooms are on the first floor, and before we reach the door a broad flight of steps must be climbed, with a wide flat terrace at the top on to which the door opens. This, on quiet summer evenings when the sun has gone round to the west and the rooks are cawing far up over our heads, makes the finest, coolest drawing-room possible, and all the year round is the family lounge, where plans are discussed, weather prognosticated, friends welcomed as they come, and watched as they drive away. The entrance hall is broad and high, with an oak staircase facing the front door, and winding round the hall with low easy steps, till it forms a corridor above. The hall is hung with deer-horns, and lined with cabinets of oak now almost as dark as ebony. From the hall open the public rooms, wainscoted with oak, but large and light, too light almost for the furniture and hangings, now a century old, and faded almost shabby, were it not for the undefinable charm which age and use and wont alone can give, of character and friendliness, associations which the young call gladness, and the old know to be regret, yet regret mingled with something strangely sweet.

Each generation has added its portraits to the walls, and the newspapers, photographs, time-bills and reviews must seem incongruous to the quiet faces that Jamieson and Ramsay painted in less feverish times.

This old house of ours stands in the very heart of a country district, long miles from any town, or even village; there are no coal-fields, no metals in the lands, not a manufactory or a tall chimney in the whole horizon. And thus while in many points now the age of the old house is showing itself, and much about it is falling into decay, dear Mother Nature has the smoothing of the pillow and the burying of the dead, and even decay becomes lovely. As in autumn the richer colours of the dying leaves are mellowed by rosier sunsets, and silvered by dim mists of morning, and diamonded by gracefulest hoar-frost till the snow comes with her pure mantle to hide their graves, so in the longer cycles that bound the life of tree, or church, or home, the tender mother's touch grows softer as the years run on. The stern smoothness and pillared strength of tree-trunk may be scarred and cleft, but the scars are soft,—ofttimes ruddy with lichens and moss,—the rifts are filled and hidden with wealth of ivy, or the tenderer green and the bright weird berries of the mistletoe, the creviced wall is fragrant with sweetbriar, and the fallen copestone has let the wallflower take root.

The framework of the old house may last for centuries, but one by one the habitable rooms are diminishing in number. The distant bedrooms are gradually displenished, and must stand empty, for if a cottage within twenty miles is burnt down, or an old servant wants a home, the laird would find an empty house, and (money being so sadly scarce) would bid them furnish it from one of the bedrooms that one never needed now. So

thus when the first frost of the next bitter winter takes the old man home, and the burying-ground has been opened and closed for the last time, the furniture will not fetch much at the sale. The auctioneer's man will contemptuously speak of the old tables and chairs as bits of sticks, and when his old cronies have each bought something as a remembrance, the house will be no longer the house it has been, but four walls, to be demolished or restored at the caprice of the new possessor ; in either case to be the "auld house" no more, but Mr. Black Diamond's beautiful new place in Perthshire, or Whiteseam Castle, the magnificent baronial residence of Sir Cotton Whiteseam, built on the site of, and containing the courtyard and a piece of the wall of an old mansion-house.

It is often strange to watch the various effects of age upon houses. I do not mean by age any sudden destruction as by fire or sword, but merely the slow changes during the gradual lapse of time. One of the gentlest, tenderest ways in which age can come to a house is seen when in a lonely country district a house is simply let alone : "So fleet the works of men back to their earth again." I know one which was bought some years ago by a very rich nobleman, from the old race whose house it was. He has a great house of his own within a few miles, and has simply left the other to itself. He is fond of field-sports, and now the gardens, park, and woods of the old house are a pheasant preserve, no foot but that of the gamekeeper brushes the dew from the grass-grown avenue. Rabbits burrow under the pear-trees in the garden, and great hares lope about the terraces, where they feel so much at home, that even their restless ears lie still. No shadows flit past the windows of the deserted rooms, for the rotten flooring can support no footsteps heavier than a ghost's, and owls and jackdaws chatter and hiss where the children used to play. The grass is dank and long, and the unthinned pines cast a funereal shade even at midsummer ; still the setting sun reddens its turrets and high eaves, and grotesque gurgoyles glisten white in the moon and the free air of heaven breathes round it fragrant with hawthorn in spring, heavy in summer and autumn with the scent of ungathered roses, even in winter spiced with the aroma of the pines. How different in scent and colour from other old houses I have seen.

On either side of the High Street of Edinburgh are narrow streets or lanes which run at right angles to it, as ribs from a backbone. Many of these terminate in, or are lined by, tall old houses, long ago the residences of nobles and wealthy burghers. They are now inhabited by the very poorest and most squalid of the population, many of them almost exclusively by Irish immigrants ; and there are few contrasts of the kind more strange and pathetic, than that afforded by the glimpses of the comfort and magnificence of the past, seen amid the wretchedness and squalor of the present. Take one for a type of all. A long passage, about four feet wide, on the level of the street, even narrower above, where the high walls almost meet to shut out the sky, leads to a massive archway. The passage, if clean and fresh, would be a pleasant entrance, cool in summer, sheltered in winter ; but the pavement is broken and dank ooze stands in pools, while

decaying vegetables, fishbones, and other worse refuse, make the passage a pesthouse. The arched doorway discloses a lofty hall from which large rooms open, while a noble oak staircase leads to the upper stories. It was once the town mansion of one of our oldest Scottish families, now every room contains a separate family; and not only this, but the larger rooms are divided and subdivided—here by lath and plaster; here by brickwork partitions, which do not even reach to the roof; here again only by a ragged curtain, or here in more careful manner by screens of brown paper pasted on cross-bars of wood. Four, even five families in one room, separated only by such flimsy partitions; oaths, brutality, and drunkenness making themselves heard through every corner of it: and yet on inaccessible niches of the oak staircase the shield and device of the family can still be seen, and gleams of sunlight still glint on shreds of tapestry-carved cornices and painted roofs. Where the Solemn League and Covenant lay for signature, fish-hawkers wrangle and organ-grinders count their ill-gotten coppers; where Charles Townsend supped with the Lord President of the Court of Session thieves divide their spoil. Could these rooms speak what tales they might tell, sad and strange, of change and decay—of one master slain in a chance medley of Scotts and Kers for the “crown of the causeway;” of another, the last of his race that the old house ever saw, pining in solitude and poverty in a garret at St. Germain, watching the fair and fading white rose, symbol of his loyalty to the race for whom he had fought so vainly. For when Charles Edward was at Holyrood, the old house rang with merriment and echoed to the clank of spurs; but the light of the hopeless struggle which had waxed at Prestonpans, and waned at Falkirk, went down in blood on the disastrous eve of Culloden, and like many another, the house changed hands when its master became a banished outlaw. Then some canny Whig lawyer tried to buy the pictures, and relics, and the old home associations when he bought the walls. But it will not do, good investment as it was; the new master cannot feel it is his own. Strange shadows lurk in corners, armour falls with a clank at uncanny hours, and on suggestive anniversaries; one by one the pictures with their restless following eyes are turned to the wall or condemned to the lumber-room; and by the time the lawyer has prospered enough to buy “a’ bit place” in the country, he finds that the house has got a bad name and won’t let. He then cuts it up into small tenements, lets part of it for an office: the character of the tenants gets worse and worse, while their number increases at every term day, till the quiet, grave home of a family becomes the teeming rabbit-warren it now is.

And then the sooner the end comes the better. To be gutted by a fire, condemned by the Dean of Guild, or swept away by a railway company, seems, any of them, a more merciful fate than to drag on, a nest of fever and den of thieves, till from very rottenness it crumbles on the heads of its inmates. While it stands, with rags for ivy, and oaths and ribaldry instead of the wild-bird’s song, it is a “caput mortuum,” not a ruin—it is pestilential without being picturesque.

A Strange Story.

WHEN the criminal, Pierre Granger, escorted by four gendarmes, was placed in the dock of the court of assize, there was a general stir amongst the crowd which had assembled from every quarter to be present at his trial.

Pierre Granger was not an ordinary culprit—not one of those poor wretches whom the court, as a matter of form, furnishes with an advocate, judges in the presence of a heedless auditory, and sends to oblivion in the convict prisons of the State. He had figured at Augtil in the columns of the newspapers; and while M. Lépervier had undertaken his defence, M. Louraugain, the attorney-general, was to conduct the prosecution. Now, at the time of which I write, these two men stood at the head of their profession. Whenever it was known that they were to be pitted against each other in any cause, crowds immediately flocked to enjoy their eloquent sentences, sonorous periods, and phrases as round and as polished as so many billiard-balls. It was a perfect riot of tropes and figures, a delicious confusion of periphrases and metaphors. All the figures of rhetoric defiled before the charmed auditory, and sported, jested, and struggled with each other, like Virgil's playful shepherds. There was a luxury of epithets, passing even that of the Abbé Delille. Every individual substantive was as regularly followed by its attendant adjective, as the great lady of the last century by her train-bearing page. In this pompous diction a man became a mortal, a horse a courser, the moon was styled pale Dian. My father and my mother were never called so, but invariably "the authors of my being;" a dream was a vision, a glass a crystal vase, a knife a sword, a car a chariot, and a breeze became a whirlwind: all of which, no doubt, tended to produce a style of exceeding sublimity and beauty.

Pierre Granger was a clumsily built fellow, five feet ten in height, thirty-eight years old, with foxy hair, a high colour, and small cunning grey eyes. He was accused of having strangled his wife, cut up the body into pieces, and then, in order to conceal his crime, set fire to the house, wherein his three children perished. Such an accumulation of horrors had shed quite a romantic halo round their perpetrator. Ladies of rank and fashion flocked to the gaol to look at him; and his autograph was in wonderful request, as soon as it became known that Madame Césarine Langelot, the lioness of the district, possessed some words of his writing in her album, placed between a ballad by a professor of rhetoric and a problem by the engineer-in-chief of the department: neither gentleman, to say the truth, being much flattered by such close juxtaposition with the interesting pet-prisoner. When Pierre Granger, with his lowering brow and air of stolid cunning, was placed in the dock, the names of twelve jurors were drawn by lot, and the president demanded of the

counsel on either side, whether they wished to exercise their right of challenge. Both declined offering any objection to twelve such honourable names; but the attorney-general added, that he would require the drawing of a supplementary juror. It was done, and on the paper appeared the name of Major Vernor. At the sound, a slight murmur was heard amongst the spectators, while MM. Louraugain and Lépersier exchanged a rapid glance which seemed to say:—"Will not *you* challenge him?" But neither of them did so; an officer conducted Major Vernor into his appointed place, and amid profound silence the indictment was read. Major Vernor had lived in the town during the last two years. Every one gave him the military title, yet none could tell when, or where, or whom he had served. He seemed to have neither family nor friends; and when any of his acquaintances ventured to sound him on the subject, he always replied in a manner by no means calculated to encourage curiosity. "Do *I* trouble my head about *your* affairs?" he would say. "Your shabby old town suits me well enough as a residence, but if you don't think I have a right to live in it, I shall be most happy to convince you of the fact at daybreak to-morrow with gun, sword, or pistol." Major Vernor was precisely the very man to keep his word; the few persons who had entered his lodgings reported that his bedroom resembled an armoury, so fully was it furnished with all sorts of murderous weapons. Notwithstanding this, he seemed a very respectable sort of man, regular in his habits, punctual in his payments, and fond of smoking excellent cigars, sent him, he used to say, by a friend in Havannah. He was tall, very thin, bald, and always dressed in black; his moustaches curled to a point; and he invariably wore his hat cocked over his right ear. In the evenings he used to frequent the public reading-rooms of the town, but he never played at any game, or conversed with the company, remaining absorbed in his newspaper until the clock struck ten, when he lit his cigar, twisted his moustaches, and with a stiff, silent bow, took his departure. It sometimes happened that one of the company, bolder than the others, said, "Good night, major!" Then the major would stop, fix his grey eye on the speaker, and reply, "Good night, monsieur!" but in so rude and angry a tone that the words sounded more like a malediction than a polite salutation. It was remarked that whoever thus ventured to address the major, was, during the remainder of the evening, the victim of some strange ill-luck. He regularly lost at play, was sure to knock his elbow through a handsome lamp or vase, or in some way to get entangled in a misadventure. So firmly were the good townfolk persuaded that the major possessed an evil eye, that their common expression, when any one met with a misfortune, was:—"He must have said 'good night' to the major."

This mysterious character dined every day at the ordinary of the Crown Hotel, and although habitually silent, seemed usually contented with the fare. One day, however, after having eaten some bread soup, he cast his eye along the table, frowned, and calling the host, said:—"How comes it that the dinner to-day is entirely meagre?"

"Monsieur, no doubt, forgets that this is Good Friday."

"Send me up two mutton chops."

"Impossible, major—there is not an ounce of meat to be had at any butcher's in the town."

"Let me have some fowl."

"That is not to be had, either."

"What a set of fools!" exclaimed the major, striking his clenched hand on the table with such force that the bottles reeled and rocked just as if all the wine in their bodies had got into their heads. Then he called the waiter, and said, "Baptiste, go to my lodging, and bring me the inlaid carbine which hangs over my pillow."

The poor host trembled, and grew very pale when Baptiste returned with a double-barrelled gun, beautifully inlaid with silver. The major coolly examined the locks, put on fresh caps, cocked both barrels, and walked out, followed at a respectful distance by the guests and inmates of the hotel. Not far off stood an old ivy-mantled church, whose angular projections were haunted by many ravens. Two large ones flew out of a turret just as the major came up and took aim for a double shot. Down tumbled both the unclean birds at his feet.

"*Sacré bleu!*" said he, picking them up. "I'm regularly sold—they're quite lean."

He returned to the hotel, and, according to his express orders, one moiety of his ill-omened booty was dressed in a savoury stew, and the other simply roasted. Of both dishes he partook so heartily that not a vestige of either remained, and he declared that he had never eaten more relishing food. From that day the major became an object of uneasiness to some, of terror to others, of curiosity to all. Whenever he appeared on the public promenade, every one avoided him: at the theatre, his box was generally occupied by himself alone; and each old woman that met him in the street invariably stopped to cross herself. Major Vernor was never known to enter a church, or accept an invitation; at first he used to receive a good many of these, and the perfumed billets served him to light his cigars.

Such, then, was the thirteenth juror drawn in the cause of Pierre Granger, and it may easily be understood why the audience were moved at hearing the name of Major Vernor. The paper of accusation, notwithstanding drawn up by the attorney-general with a force and particularity of description which horrified the ladies present, was read amid profound silence broken only by the snoring of the prisoner, who had coolly settled himself to sleep. The gendarmes tried to rouse him from his slumber, but they merely succeeded in making him now and then half open his dull, brutish eyes. When the clerk had ceased to read, Pierre Granger was with difficulty thoroughly awakened, and the president proceeded to question him. The interrogatory fully revealed, in all its horror, the thoroughly stupid fiendishness of the wretch. He had killed his wife, he said, because they couldn't agree; he had set his house on fire because it was a cold night, and he wanted to make a good blaze

to warm himself; as to his children, they were dirty squalling little things—no loss to him or to any one else. It would be tedious to pursue all the details of this disgusting trial. M. Louraugain and M. Lépervier both made marvellously eloquent speeches, but the latter deserved peculiar credit, having so very bad a cause to sustain. Although he well knew that his client was as thorough a scoundrel as ever breathed, and that his condemnation would be a blessing to society, yet he pleaded his cause with all a lawyer's conscientiousness. When he got to the peroration, he managed to squeeze from his eyes a few rare tears, the last and most precious, I imagine, which he carefully reserved for an especially solemn occasion—just as some families preserve a few bottles of fine old wine, to be drunk at the marriage of a daughter or the coming of age of a son. At length the case closed, and the president was going to sum up; but as the heat in court was excessive, and every one present stood in need of refreshment, leave was given for the jury to retire for half-an-hour, and the hall was cleared for the same space of time, in order that it might undergo a thorough ventilation. During this interval, while twelve of the jurors were cooling themselves with ices and sherbet, the thirteenth lighted a cigar, and reclining in an arm-chair, smoked away with the gravity of a Turk.

"What a capital cigar!" sighed one of the jurors, as he watched, with an envious eye, the odoriferous little clouds escaping from the smoker's lips.

"Would you like to try one?" asked the major, politely offering his cigar-case.

"If it would not trespass too much on your kindness."

"By no means. You are heartily welcome." The juror took a cigar, and lighted it at that of his obliging neighbour. "Well, how do you like it?" asked the major.

"Delicious! It has an uncommonly pleasant aroma. From whence are you supplied?"

"From the Havannah." Several jurors now approached, casting longing eyes at Major Vernor's cigar-case.

"Gentlemen," said he, "I am really grieved that I have not a single cigar left to offer you, having just given the last to our worthy friend. To-morrow, however, I hope to have a fresh supply, and shall then ask you to do me the honour of accepting some."

At that moment, an official came in to announce that the court had resumed its sitting: the jury hastened to their box, and the president began his charge. Scarcely had he commenced, however, when the juror who had smoked the cigar rose and in a trembling voice begged permission to retire, as he felt very ill. Indeed, while in the act of speaking, he fell backwards, and lay senseless on the floor. The president, of course, directed that he should be carefully conveyed to his home, and desired Major Vernor to take his place. Six strokes sounded from the old clock of the town-hall as the jury retired to deliberate on their verdict in the case of Pierre Granger. Eleven gentlemen exclaimed with one

voice, that the wretched assassin's guilt was perfectly clear, and that they could not hesitate for a moment as to their decision. Major Vernor, however, stood up, placed his back against the door, and regarding his colleagues with a peculiarly sinister expression, said slowly,—

"I shall acquit Pierre Granger, and you shall all do the same!"

"Sir," replied the foreman in a severe tone, "you are answerable to your conscience for your own actions, but I do not see what right you have to offer us a gratuitous insult."

"Am I then so unfortunate as to offend you?" asked the major, meekly

"Certainly, in supposing us capable of breaking the solemn oath which we have taken, to do impartial justice. I am a man of honour—"

"Bah!" interrupted the major, "are you quite sure of that?"

A general murmur of indignation arose.

"Do you know, sir, that such a question is a fresh insult?"

"You are quite mistaken," said Major Vernor. "What I said was drawn forth by a feeling of the solemn responsibility which rests with us. Before I can resolve to make a dead body of a living moving being, I must feel satisfied that both you and I are less guilty than Pierre Granger, which, after all, is not so certain."

An ominous silence ensued: the major's words seemed to strike home to every breast, and at length one of the jurors said,—“You seem, sir, to regard the question from a philosophical point of view.”

"Just so, Monsieur Cerneau."

"You know me, then?" said the juror, in a trembling voice.

"Not very intimately, my dear sir, but just sufficiently to appreciate your fondness for discounting bills at what your enemies might call usurious interest. I think it was about four years ago that an honest poor man, the father of a large family, blew out his brains, in despair, at being refused by you a short renewal, which he had implored on his knees."

Without replying, M. Cerneau retired to the farthest corner of the room, and wiped off the large drops of sweat which started from his brow.

"What does this mean?" inquired another juror, impatiently. "Have we come hither to act a scene from the *Memoirs of the Devil*?"

"I don't know that work," replied the major; "but may I advise you, Monsieur de Bardine, to calm your nerves?"

"Sir, you are impertinent, and I shall certainly do myself the pleasure to chastise you."

"As how?"

"With my sword. I shall do you the honour to meet you to-morrow."

"An honour which, being a man of sense, I must beg to decline. You don't kill your adversaries, Monsieur de Bardine; you murder them. Have you forgotten your duel with Monsieur de Lillar, which took place, I am told, without witnesses? While he was off his guard, you treache-

rously struck him through the heart. The prospect of a similar catastrophe is certainly by no means enticing."

With an instinctive movement, M. de Bardine's neighbours drew off.

"I admire such virtuous indignation," sneered the major. "It especially becomes *you*, Monsieur Darien——"

"What infamy are you going to cast in *my* teeth?" exclaimed the gentleman addressed.

"Oh, very little—a mere trifle—simply, that while Monsieur de Bardine kills *his* friends, you only dishonour *yours*. Monsieur Simon, whose house, table, and purse are yours, has a pretty wife——"

"Major," cried another juror, "you're a villain!"

"Pardon me, my dear Monsieur Calfat, let us call things by their proper names. The only villain amongst us, I believe, is the man who himself set fire to his house, six months after having insured it at treble its value in four offices, whose directors were foolish enough to pay the money without making sufficient inquiry."

A stifled groan escaped from M. Calfat's lips as he covered his face with his hands. "Who are you that you thus dare to constitute yourself our judge?" asked another, looking fiercely at Vernor.

"Who am I, Monsieur Peron? simply one who can appreciate your very rare dexterity in holding court-cards in your hand, and making the dice turn up as you please."

M. Peron gave an involuntary start, and thenceforward held his peace. The scene, aided by the darkness of approaching night, had now assumed a terrific aspect. The voice of the major rang in the ears of eleven pale, trembling men, with a cold metallic distinctness, as if each word inflicted a blow.

At length Vernor burst into a strange sharp hissing laugh. "Well, my honourable colleagues," he exclaimed, "does this poor Pierre Granger still appear to you unworthy of the slightest pity? I grant you, he has committed a fault, and a fault which you would not have committed in his place. He has not had your cleverness in masking his turpitude with a show of virtue—that was his real crime. Now, if after having killed his wife, he had paid handsomely for masses to be said for her repose—if he had purchased a burial-ground, and caused to be raised to her memory a beautiful square white marble monument, with a flowery epitaph on it in gold letters—why, then we should all have shed tears of sympathy, and eulogized Pierre Granger as the model of a tender husband. Don't you agree with me, Monsieur Norbec?"

M. Norbec started as if he had received an electric shock. "It is false!" he murmured. "I did not poison Eliza; she died of pulmonary consumption."

"True," said the major; "you remind me of a circumstance which I had nearly forgotten. Madame Norbec, who possessed a large fortune in her own right, died without issue five months after she had made you her sole legatee."

Then the major was silent. They were now in total darkness. Suddenly came the sharp click of a pistol, and the obscurity was for a moment brightened by a flash, but there was no report—the weapon had missed fire. The major burst into a long and loud fit of laughter. "Charming! delightful! Ah, my dear sir," he exclaimed, addressing the foreman, "you were the only honest man of the party; and see how, to oblige me, you have made an attempt on my person which places you on an honourable level with Pierre Granger!" Then, having rung the bell, he called for candles, and when they were brought, he said, "Come, gentlemen, I suppose you don't want to sleep here; let us make haste and finish our business."

Ten minutes afterwards the foreman handed in the issue paper—a verdict of Not guilty—and Pierre Granger was discharged amid the hisses and execrations of the crowd, who indeed were prevented only by a strong military force from assaulting both judge and jury. Major Vernor coolly walked up to the dock, and passing his arm under that of Pierre Granger, went out with him through a side-door.

From that hour neither the one nor the other was ever seen again in the country. That night there was a terrific thunderstorm; the ripe harvest was beaten down by hailstones as large as pigeons' eggs, and a flash of lightning striking the steeple of the old ivy-covered church tore down its gilded cross.

* * * * *

This strange story was related to me one day last year by a convict in the infirmary of the prison at Toulon. I have given it verbatim from his lips; and as I was leaving the building the sergeant who accompanied me said, "So, sir, you have been listening to the wonderful rodomontades of Number 19,788?"

"What do you mean? This history——"

"Is false from beginning to end. Number 19,788 is an atrocious criminal, who was sent to the galleys for life, and who during the last few months has given evident proofs of mental aberration. His monomania consists chiefly in telling stories to prove that all judges and jurors are rogues and villains. He was himself found guilty, by a most respectable and upright jury, of having robbed and tried to murder Major Vernor. He is now about to be placed in a lunatic asylum, so that you will probably be the last visitor who will hear his curious inventions."

"And who is Major Vernor?"

"A brave old half-pay officer, who has lived at Toulon beloved and respected during the last twelve years. You will probably see him to-day, smoking his Havannah cigar, after the table-d'hôte dinner at the Crown Hotel."

The Old Poets on the Seven Deadly Sins.

AN allegory is certainly not the most tempting dish which could be placed upon the table of the modern literary epicure. It seems to be the prevalent opinion that sermons and fiction are best taken separately, and that the combination of the two, called an allegory, is very much like the physic administered to little boys, in which a certain and easily-measured quantity of jam deceitfully conveys an uncertain proportion of rhubarb. It would be well for us not to forget, however, that our forefathers very much delighted in this species of literature, and that in fact the greater portion of our poetry, from Adam Davie's *Vision* to the *Fairy Queen*, is allegorical. From the time of Spenser to the present year of grace, the taste for this kind of production seems to have declined steadily; since, in poetry, Fletcher's *Purple Island*, the images of *Sin and Death* in Milton, Collins' *Ode on the Passions*, and in prose the *Pilgrim's Progress* and the charming little allegories of Addison and Johnson, are the only conspicuous and meritorious specimens of the class of writing we are speaking of which have been published since the reign of Elizabeth. As our object is to show how our old allegorists have dealt with the subject which stands at the head of this column, we shall take the liberty of stating briefly what we consider to have been the reasons which led them to "moralise their song."

When allegory flourished in England, the favourite amusements of the people were theatrical representations in which the personages of the drama were embodiments of abstract qualities. This was not so much the case, however, with respect to the mysteries or miracle-plays as to the moralities which succeeded them. Chaucer, who in his *Canterbury Tales* has left us a living and moving picture of his time more valuable than the folios of all the Rapins and Cartes that ever earned a name for laborious industry, has included the miracle-plays among the special diversions of the joyous Wife of Bath. Of these miracle-plays it is sufficient for the present to say that they were crude and oftentimes licentious productions, spiced as it were according to the palate of the vulgar, that *genus avidum spectaculorum*. In the moralities, however, which were entirely allegorical, may be discerned some indications of dramatic art, and they oftentimes display powers of satire worthy of Pope or Churchill. The revels and shows of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, minute descriptions of which may be found in Holinshed, were the offspring of the mysteries and moralities, and they in their turn gave birth to the masques which provided such splendid employment for the imaginative genius and pregnant fancy of Ben Jonson and Milton. The masques reached the height of their popularity in the reign of James I., and "*Comus*," which was presented at Ludlow Castle in 1634, was the last, of any pretensions,

that we are able to call to mind. The minds of the people being thus familiarized with moral spectacles, we are not surprised to find that allegory formed the staple of contemporaneous poetry. Since the Commonwealth, masques, shows, and pageants have ceased to be commonly represented, and our poets have sought the objects of their strains in "fresh woods and pastures new."

It is not to be supposed that our old allegorists would overlook the seven deadly sins in choosing subjects for their fine moralisings. They would be continually hearing about them from the pulpit; they would see them sculptured in the cathedrals and churches; their libraries would contain richly-illuminated manuscripts, in which the deadly sins would be the subject both of pen and pencil; and they would also meet with them in the popular spectacles—the mysteries, moralities, pageants, revels, or masques—of their time. Passing over Robert de Brunne's translation of the *Manuel des Péchés*, which is simply a moral disquisition, in verse, upon the Decalogue and the seven deadly sins, we come to Piers Ploughman's *Vision* (circa 1350). This allegorical poem, in which the deadly sins are personified, is a vigorous satire upon the vices of the age; but its fiercest denunciations are reserved for the priests and the monstrous superstitions inculcated by them. This poem is well known from the celebrated passage in which the author foretells the dissolution of the monasteries. Neither the discovery among the Cottonian manuscripts of some "Verses concerning the Destruction of the Monasteries," written before Piers Ploughman's *Vision*, nor the generally expressed belief of the Lollards, that the possessions of the Church would ultimately become the portion of the knights, need lessen our wonder at the circumstantiality with which the author of Piers Ploughman's *Vision* foretold what actually came to pass. The same remark which we have made concerning Robert de Brunne's translation may be applied to Gower's *Confessio Amantis* and Chaucer's *Parson's Tale*. In the *Romaunt of the Rose*, in Dunbar's *Dance*, and in Skelton's *Rewards of a Court*, we shall find some most striking impersonations of the deadly sins, while in Hawes' *Pastime of Pleasure* they are merely minor characters. Sackville's *Induction to the Complaint of Henry Duke of Buckingham* contains some wonderfully vigorous personifications; and even Spenser, strong as he was in his own originality, no doubt derived much assistance in his delineation of the seven deadly sins from the spirited creations of Sackville. Phineas Fletcher, dubbed by the fantastic Quarles "the Spenser of his age," following his great original at the distance of half a century, has drawn some of the deadly sins. His figures are conceived with a certain degree of skill, but the few beauties of the work (*The Purple Island*) are lost amid a heap of anatomical rubbish and absurdity.

We suppose that, in consequence of the mystic importance which has at all times been attached to the number seven, it was found necessary to discover seven cardinal and principal sins, from which might be educed the numerous subsidiary branches of human turpitude. We

have, said the moralists, the seven wonders of the world, the seven cities of Homer, the seven heads of the Nile, the seven gates of Thebes, the seven days of the week, and why, in the name of the seven wise men of Greece, should we not have the seven deadly sins? Thus might the number have been settled. The most natural order of placing these representative vices (although we shall be sinning slightly against precedent in the arrangement) seems to be Pride, Wrath, Envy, Covetousness, Gluttony, Lust, and Idleness. If it be true that vice is but an exaggeration of virtue, we think that the remark applies especially to pride, which being but self-esteem run mad, stands nearest to virtue; the two qualities occupying the position of the least of the vices and the least of the virtues. It was remarked by the Marquis of Halifax that "pride is an ambiguous word; one kind of it is as much a virtue as the other is a vice: but we are naturally so apt to choose the worst that it is become dangerous to commend the best side of it." It was also the first sin committed, for by it "fell the angels." Satan having heard the Son of God proclaimed

Messiah King anointed, could not bear
Through pride that sight, and thought himself impair'd.

In Piers Ploughman's *Vision*, the deadly sins, headed by Pride, are represented as coming up to confess and receive absolution, having been wrought thereto by the exhortations of Reason. The author has delineated Pride as a woman, and in this selection of sex he is followed by Spenser alone. It is common to impute this vice to females in an especial degree—from no other reason that we know of than because they ground their vanity upon things in themselves not of much use or estimation, and are therefore exposed to observation and ridicule, seeing that pride takes its claim to the world's respect, or incurs the world's scorn, according to the quality of the thing on which it is founded. The pride of men generally springs from something held in esteem, not, perhaps, inherently good, and the vice is therefore lost sight of, although it is just as egregious. Pride prostrates herself to the earth, and vows that she will for the future practise humility, and submit herself to misrepresentation with patience. Dante, in *Il Purgatorio*, has described the proud as walking about under the burden of a heavy stone, and listening to the ineffable strain of the voices which sing, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." As a penance for her misdoings, Pride declares that she will for the future wear a hair shirt next to her skin—a practice strictly in accordance with the religious fashion of the time. In these degenerate days, it is not perhaps so easy as it once was to appreciate all the torture and discomfort of this peculiar mode of self-discipline. Sir Thomas More, even when he was Chancellor, wore a hair shirt next his skin; whipped himself every Friday with a knotted cord, and allowed himself only four or five hours' rest, with the ground for his bed and a log for his pillow. Dunbar in his *Dance of the Seven Deadly Sins*, describes himself as lying in a trance, in the course of which he beholds both heaven and hell. He imagines that in hell, Mahound decrees that on Eastern's even (the evening preceding Lent—a very jolly

festival in Scotland) there should be a dance of such as had never been shrived, and that a masque should be devised to introduce the characters in proper order. Several holy hypocrites first appear, but they cause no mirth to Mahound; when, however, a lot of priests with shaven crowns come forward, the infernal regions resound with the laughter and mockery of the fiends. This poem was written about sixty years before the final abolition of popery in Scotland; and of the scandalous condition of the Scottish Church at this time, Hallam, summing up the lengthy narrative of McCrie, thus speaks:—"The Scots church had been immensely rich; its riches had led, as everywhere else, to neglect of duties and dissoluteness of life; and these vices had met their usual punishment in the people's hatred." The idea of making the priests, as Dunbar has done, the object of scorn to the smallest of fiends—the very brownies even—is certainly from the mind of a master of satire and the grotesque. After the priests have passed, Mahound orders the masque to proceed, upon which the seven deadly sins come dancing in. It is said that in some parts of Italy the people are still fond of seeing spectacles in which the deadly sins dance a measure with the Evil One. First in the dance comes Pride, attended by a band of cheating scoundrels (intended, we suppose, to represent the numerous train of vices which follow in the wake of pride), who, as they skip along through the scalding fire, make the place ring again with their hideous groans. Pride himself stalks in after the manner of a Spanish Hidalgo of bluest blood, with his hair pushed back from his face, with his bonnet set on one side, and his cassock trailing in ruffled folds all about his heels. The proud superfluity of dress which is here remarked upon, was more characteristic of the female attire of the time, which really was of most inordinate amplitude. An amusing story is told in one of the Percy Society's publications of a woman, who, for excessive pride, wore a very long white train, which, when she walked, raised a great cloud of dust behind her—after the manner of our modern fashionable fair ones. When the lady lifted her train, a certain devil who was standing by; was observed to laugh heartily. On being asked the cause of his merriment, he said that a brother devil was in the habit of using the lady's train for a carriage, but when the wearer pulled it up the unfortunate devil was rolled in the dirt. Skelton's *Rewards of a Court* is an allegorical poem or pageant, in which the qualities—the mystic seven as usual—most likely to forward one's fortune at court are personified; and amongst the rest are impersonations of one or two of the cardinal sins. Skelton paints Pride, under the name of Disdain, with very gaudy and expensive garments; and, although we find scattered up and down in the works of all the old writers objurcations upon extravagance in dress, yet we must confess that Skelton was especially justified in his reflections, since the dandies of his time, in addition to other expensive absurdities, had usurped the stomachers and petticoats of the women, and carried very large hats, with enormous feathers, slung over their backs. Skelton's Pride is a fire-eating

fellow, who evidently thinks that the world is only just large enough for himself and perhaps a servant or two. Spenser, perhaps the last, is at the same time the chief of our allegorists, and to him Dunbar alone can be considered as a worthy rival. In the fourth canto of the first book of the *Fairy Queen* the poet has described the House of Pride and the inmates thereof. It will be remembered that the Red Cross Knight, having been separated from Una by the treachery of Archimago, is brought by Duessa to the House of Pride. Pride herself is seated on a rich throne, with a dragon at her feet, and is attended by a numerous train of lords and ladies. She is attired most gorgeously, and shines like the sun with gold and precious stones, the lustre of which, however, are said to be dimmed by the awful blaze of her beauty. This description of Pride reminds one of that given of Medea, when she is first seen by Jason. Disdaining to look upon the earth as too vile for her, Pride exalts her eyes to heaven, only lowering them now and then to view herself in a mirror which she holds in her hand. Like Narcissus of old, she is represented as in love with herself. Queen Lucifera, as Spenser has named pride, referring to the original sin of Satan or Lucifer, reigns over a kingdom whose sovereignty she has usurped ; but her sceptre will of course be broken, when we shall enter into the full enjoyment of the promise of a "recovered Paradise to all mankind." Her maxim, with which those who have studied history will no doubt be familiar, is to rule by policy and not by law, and her counsellors are the remaining cardinal sins. She is the daughter of Pluto and Proserpine, by which the idea of her being conceived in hell is intended to be conveyed ; but disdaining her high parentage, she claims Jove for her sire, and would exalt herself to a goddess. Of this latter form of pride, history supplies us with many examples, such as that of Alexander, who bribed the priests of Jupiter Ammon to honour him as the son of their deity ; Domitian, who commanded that he should be called God in all the state papers ; Caligula, who used to sit among the gods and cause sacrifices to be made to him, and also to hurl stones towards heaven in defiance of the thunder-bearing Jove ; and many others. As to the pride of ancestry, it seems useless to preach to men of the common origin of the human race, and to go back to father Noah, the *propositus* alike of the travelling tinker and the scented Alcibiades of the Guards ; or to tell them with St. Jerome, *Summa apud Deum nobilitas, clarum esse virtutibus*. There are other branches of Pride which the poets we have mentioned have not dealt with, such as that of wealth, which is found in its rampant form among those who have been dipped in the Pactolus of modern commerce, and have suddenly come up from the depths heavy with auriferous dross. The pride of religion as exemplified in the Pharisee of the parable was perhaps hardly capable of introduction into the allegories we have been considering, but it is a little curious that occasion has not been taken to satirize the pride of humility, of which we consider the life of Diogenes the cynic to furnish the most flagrant example.

Wrath occupies the position next to Pride in our catalogue of the deadly sins; for when once a man is possessed with pride in some gift of grace or fortune which he imagines himself to possess, the least want of sympathy with his pretensions is apt to move him to resentment. In Piers Ploughman's *Vision*, Wrath is represented as coming up to the confession invited by Reason, with his nostrils quivering, his eyes wild and dilated, and his lips tightly compressed between his teeth. He is very properly described as a friar, and at one time gardener to the convent; for putting aside the fact that the poem was written by a Lollard, the monks and friars were then, and had long been, noted for their quarrelsome and brawling character. It was very common for them to get up fights both with fists and knives over their cups, even when these latter were full of liquor, showing that their gluttony, for which they were celebrated, was surpassed by their disposition to quarrel. They would give one another the lie, and swear like our friend Friar John of the Funnel, with this difference, that, as he explains, his oaths were but the colours of a Ciceronian rhetoric, and are among the class sanctioned by Longinus. 'There were at this time bitter feuds between the begging friars and the monks, between the barons and yeomen'; in fact, society was in that unsettled and seething state, which is always the prelude to great revolutions. Wrath declares that among the friars he finds the readiest followers, since there is always some quarrel going on among them, be it about shricing the people without licence, or what not. He has two aunts, one a nun and the other an abbess. He was for some time cook in their convent, and as may be supposed, he does not neglect his opportunities of setting the dear creatures by the ears. By virtue of his office he would have plenty of chances of doing this, for the cook was a very important personage in the economy of monastical and conventual establishments. The office of chief cook was never bestowed, except on those who had made the art of Apicius their study, and Fuller declares that there were some who could have pleased the palate of the archglutton himself. From the description given, Wrath appears to have belonged to an establishment of the Gilbertines, where it was the duty of one of the cooks to serve the nuns at supper, for he says he served the monks and nuns for many months. His method of stirring up anger and strife among the nuns, will enlighten us as to the then prevailing abuses. He insinuates that one was born out of wedlock, that another had lost her virtue to a priest, and so on. They sit and dispute over these things till the lie is given, and thereupon delicate nails are buried in delicate flesh, the want of cold steel alone preventing its use. That the charges insinuated by the poet against the nuns are not libellous, we may assume from the account of the famous visitation of the Bishop of Lincoln, and the means adopted by him for singling out the chaste from the unchaste; and also from the discovery in the nunneries of amulets and saintly relics, supposed to be efficacious in cases of pregnancy. The nuns of Gracedieu, for instance, rejoiced in the possession of a part of St. Francis'

coat, and those of St. Mary's, Derby, in that of a fragment of the shirt of St. Thomas, both of which were supposed to be useful to ladies requiring the good offices of Lucina. Nor did the manners of the nuns improve with time, if we may believe half the fiery narrative of the good Bishop of Ossory. Moreover, among the *Inquirenda circa Conventum*, are the following queries. Are the inmates apt to give the lie to each other? Are they in the habit of striking one another? Not only in this particular part, but throughout the whole of Piers Ploughman's *Vision*, and the works of Chaucer, there is a great quantity of information which sheds a light upon monastic and conventual rule, and photographs for us, as it were, the inner life of the devotees of the time. Ire comes swaggering into Dunbar's *Dance*, like an uncivil bear, in a manner intended to stir up strife. As if to be ready for a fray he goes always with his hand upon his dagger, which at that time was considered a necessary part of the apparel of a gentleman, and was worn suspended from the girdle, together with the purse. He is accompanied by a band of wild swashbuckler fellows, boasters, braggarts and wranglers, all "armed to point," who pass on in military order, two and two, as if expecting immediate battle. These rude retainers deal blows all around them at random, and sometimes finish by fleshing their knives to the hilt in each other. This is intended to reflect upon the numerous train of idle followers with which it was the practice for the great lords to surround themselves. Especially was this the case with the Highland chieftains, who troubled themselves little to restrain, nay, even encouraged, the depredations of their dependants upon the unfortunate Lowland proprietors. Henry VII. not long afterwards felt himself called upon to deal with the matter in England, by passing the statutes restraining the nobility from keeping such hosts of retainers, thus, as Sir Walter Scott points out, not only striking at the root of the power of the aristocracy, and contributing to the downfall of the institution of chivalry, but laying the foundations of the subsequent freedom of the English people. In the *Fairy Queen*, Wrath, to whom Spenser gives the last place in his grotesque team, is represented riding on a lion, which seems loth to go forward. The beasts which Spenser has associated with the different vices are those which the common estimation of the characteristics of the various animals would lead us to look for. We are not perhaps altogether right in assigning certain vicious qualities to particular animals, but the custom has no doubt arisen from the teaching of the fables familiar to us in our youth. Seneca says that if he were called upon to describe Anger he should draw a tiger bathed in blood, just about to pounce on his prey, or as the Furies are represented, with whips, snakes, and flames. Wrath carries in his hand a burning torch (the torch of Discord), which he brandishes about his head. His eyes flash forth sparks of fire, his face is livid like that of a corpse, his hands, which tremble with the violence of his passion, clutch an unsheathed dagger, and he meets the regards of all around him with a grim angry stare. Compare this with Seneca's description of an angry man, with a fierce and threaten-

ing countenance, as pale as ashes, and in the same moment as red as blood; a glaring eye, a wrinkled brow, trembling lips, a forced and squeaking voice, knocking knees and violent motions of the whole body. The ragged garments of Wrath are all stained with the blood of those whom he has slain in fits of unreflecting passion.

For of his hands he had no government,
 No ear^l for blood in his avengement:
 But, when the furious fit was overpast,
 His cruel facts he often would repent;
 Yet, wilful man, he never would forecast
 How many mischiefs should ensue his heedless hast.

This is a capital picture of a choleric man, and might very well be taken for a portrait of our own Henry VIII., but that Spenser would take care not so to paint the father of the fiery Elizabeth, his own Gloriana and "dearest-dread." Spenser has devoted a stanza to the enumeration of the followers of Wrath, namely, Bloodshed, Strife, "bitter Despite with Ran-cour's rusty knife," Grief, and the various bodily ailments which serve to sweeten the tempers of passionate men. We cannot do better in leaving this second deadly sin than quote the beautiful sentences of Sir Thomas Browne on this subject:—"Answer not the spur of fury, and be not prodigal or prodigious in revenge. Make not one in the *historia horribilis*; slay not thy servant for a broken glass, nor pound him in a mortar who offendeth thee; supererogate not in the worst sense, and overdo not the necessities of evil; humour not the injustice of revenge."

Next in the allegoric procession limps squinting Envy, whom Piers Ploughman represents as coming up to ask for shrift, crying *mea culpa* with great show of repentance, but at the same time secretly cursing his enemies. His body seems ready to burst with suppressed spleen, and his lean and lowering visage has the paleness of one in the palsy, or of a sun-dried leek. His kirtle, a kind of tunic or waistcoat, and courtpey or uppermost cloak, the sleeves of which have been cut from the gown of a friar, are both old and worm-eaten. It is hard to unriddle the meaning of clothing Envy in part of a friar's garb, except upon the supposition that the author regarded the cowed fraternity as representatives of all the deadly sins. Envy, by his confession, seems to have passed his life amid bustle and excitement, for whatever he knew amiss of Watkin he told to Will, and of course reported to Watkin the shortcomings of Will, embittering thereby the existence of those two individuals. Envy goes on to declare that he would rather ensure the mischance of his neighbour than gain a wey of Essex cheese, showing thereby that he had not the means or had not learnt the art, common in our time, of combining the *utile* with the *dulce*. Proceeding in his confession, Envy says that when he is in church, and should be praying for palmers and pilgrims, he finds himself muttering curses; and that when, turning himself from the altar, he sees an acquaintance with a new coat, he is immediately seized with deep pangs of covetousness. He was present in a quiet country church on a much more recent occasion, if we are to trust the

narration by the historian of the adventures of Tom Jones, touching the destruction of the fine apparel of poor Molly Seagrim. Like a Russian noble of the old school, Envy wishes every one were his serf. Of course he laughs at other people's misfortunes, and, equally of course, weeps when his neighbours rejoice. The author has here taken a hint from Ovid, who says of Envy—

Vixque tenet lacrymas, quia nil lacrymabile cernit.

Among the many "full rich portraitures" which are limned upon the wall of the garden of the Rose, as described by Chaucer, is a very excellent one of Envy. She (Fielding has also described Envy as a woman, and has called her the sister of Satan) has a "full foul usage" of never looking man or woman straight in the face; she either gives suspicious side-glances, or half shuts her eyes in the manner of people who wish to express a pretended disdain, prompted by real jealousy of those who are good and worthy, or who stand high in the estimation of others, exemplifying thereby, we observe, the old saying, *Invidia virtutis comes*. Envy, says Chaucer, never laughs. The full significance of this expression can only be apprehended by reflecting upon the part which laughter plays in the human economy. Carlyle, in remarking upon the immortal cachinnation of Teufelsdröckh, says that "no man who has heartily and wholly laughed, can be altogether irreclaimably bad." Few, adds he, are able to laugh what can be called laughing, but the man who cannot laugh at all "is not only fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils; but his whole life is already a treason and a stratagem." Old Geoffrey, in thus drawing Envy, has not only exhibited his knowledge of human nature, but his intimacy with that philosophy which has now become associated with the name of the divine Pantagruel. He tells us, moreover, that the things which please Envy most, and which bring the nearest approach to a sardonic grin into her face, are the misfortunes, diseases, and discomfitures of the good, great, and honourable, even if they should be of her own kindred or friends. The marvellous philosophy with which people do bear the misfortunes of their friends—perhaps neither good, great, nor honourable—though it may not be attributable simply to envy, has yet for a very long period been a remarkable feature of most human societies. Dunbar has described Envy as a traitorous fellow, who trembles as he goes with secret hate, and whose malicious and spiteful thoughts are wholly bent on "feud and felony." His followers are composed of oily dissemblers, the Pecksniffs of the period, flatterers, backbiters, and slanderers. Alas, cries the poet—

That courts of noble kings

Of them can never be quit.

Dunbar, in his various suits at the court of James IV. of Scotland, had suffered from the unfriendly offices of those whom he would place in the above category, and perhaps he was, as a result thereof, at that time enduring what he called "the silver sorrow." We think his portraiture of Envy the lamest of the figures in his *Dance*, while it at the same

time compares favourably with those drawn by the other poets. Some critics have taken exception to Spenser's description of Envy, and have quoted it as a specimen of that unnecessary minuteness in specifying disgusting details, which is one of the very few faults with which he can be charged. In this particular case, however, the sin is not so conspicuous as in other instances, the description of Duessa for example. Envy rides in the miserable team of Pride upon a ravenous wolf, which, according to the taste of the reader, may be considered the best or the worst representative of Envy to be found in the circle of animated nature. He chaws between his cankered teeth a venomous toad, the poison from which runs about his jaw. Here the image is sufficiently disgusting, it must be confessed, but it should be recollected that the Elizabethan was not mealy-mouthed age, nor was it the object of the poet to make the deadly sins drawing-room characters, or such attractive gentlemen, that if one were to knock against them in the flesh, one's first impulse would be to ask them to dinner. Envy carries a snake in his bosom, and is clothed in a loose silk gown of various colours "ypainted full of eyes," the *vigiles oculi* of Virgil's monster Report, perhaps. Of his other characteristics it is sufficient to say that he grudges the wealth of his neighbours; gnashes his teeth for rage on beholding the heap of gold carried by his neighbour Avarice; almost expires with spleen when he sees any good thing, but rejoices at tidings of evil; those who feed the hungry he accuses of interested motives, and generally as it seems to us, instead of exalting the horn of the righteous, would with all his strength bring it to confusion and shame; but worse than all (execrated be his memory)—

. . . The verse of famous poet's wit
He does backbite and spiteful poison spues
From leprous mouth on all that ever writ.

Covetousness or Covetise is, perhaps, one of the most striking impersonations in Piers Ploughman's *Vision*. The poet begins by doubting his own ability to describe this character fittingly, and introduces him as a stern and hungry-looking caitiff—a kind of lean Cassius in fact. His beetle brows, blubber lips, bleared eyes, and globbered beard, are not rendered less repulsive by his shrivelled leathern cheeks. A hood, over which a filthy hat is placed, composes his head-dress, while for the rest he has a ragged and threadbare tabard which has borne the brunt of twelve winters' wear, and which is covered with those dreaded insects of which the Italian beggars are supposed to harbour the finest specimens. From his confession we gain information respecting the principal trade tricks of the time, which, it may be remarked, bear a striking resemblance to those which our police courts are continually bringing to light. That the manufacturers of wooden nutmegs, old port, Derby champagne, and birch-broom tea have much to learn from the confession of Covetise, we greatly doubt; but it may at least possess for them an antiquarian interest, and, perchance, may grace the preface of some future edition of *The Cheat's Vade-Mecum*. The first accomplishment acquired by Covetise in his

'prenticehood was telling lies in the way of trade: not, be it remarked, for the mere pleasure of the thing, like Gascon Barère for instance, of whose memoirs it has been said that he who has not read them cannot be said to know what it is to lie. The next lesson Covetise had to learn was to cheat in weighing, a matter requiring, we should think, considerable boldness and dexterity, considering the anxiety on the subject which is evidenced by the penal provisions of the Statute of the Pillory and Tumbrel. The wife of Covetise, by name Rose the Reqrator, was, we are told, a weaver by trade, and seems, amiable creature, to have been in the habit of estimating the work of her spinsters by a weight representing a pound, but really of a pound and a quarter. She was also an alewife, and mixed "penny ale and pudding ale" together for labourers and low folk, and although we cannot quite comprehend the peculiar iniquity of this proceeding, it was doubtless well understood by the chawbacons of the period. The confession of Covetise is the longest of the seven, and we have only dealt with the salient points of it. Dunbar, after St. Paul, apostrophizes covetousness as the root of all evil and ground of vice. He gives him for followers in the *Dance* a crew of misers, usurers, muskworms, and despicable wretches, who spit out hot molten gold, like fire-flakes upon one another, and as soon as they have discharged their auriferous cargo in this eccentric manner, the ready fiends fill them anew up to the very throttle with coin of every description, which reminds us of what happened to Crassus. The whole picture is filled with those ludicrous and yet impressive touches in which so great a part of Dunbar's excellence consists. Sackville's "greedy Care" is a rough man, whose tanned and seamed flesh, knobbed knuckles, and grimy hands, attest the violence of the labour to which he subjects himself for the purpose of feeding his avarice. At earliest dawn he runs to his work, and even when light hath given place to darkness he "hath his candles to prolong his toil." Small need of Early Closing Associations when to work after dark was considered to be a sign of avarice. We now return to the contemplation of the gorgeous canvas of Spenser. Avarice, the fourth in his fair band, rides upon a camel bowed with his mighty burden of gold, which is contained in two iron coffers. It may perhaps be regarded as hypercritical, but we cannot help remarking here that an ostentatious display of wealth, such as Spenser has depicted, is by no means characteristic of avaricious men, who usually resort to the most curious devices in order to conceal their wealth. Avarice, according to Spenser, is a wretched wight tormented with a grievous gout, and may be said to have one foot in the grave. He sacrifices very little to the graces (a somewhat costly form of worship), as his threadbare coat and cobbled shoes testify; he bows not at the shrine of St. Apicius, since he never tasted good morsel during the whole of his life. His maxim in short is to spare from his belly and his back to fill his money-bags. He toys with a heap of coin displayed in his lap (another instance of the error we have pointed out), and is represented as following the trade of an usurer, a kind of Ralph Nickleby of the

period. Through his daily anxiety to get and his nightly fear to lose, he leads a miserable life, and according to the proverb may be said to live unknown to himself since he can hardly be said to know what living means. "Most wretched wight," exclaims the poet,—

Whom nothing might suffice ;
 Whose greedy lust did lack in greatest store ;
 Whose need had end, but no end Covetise ;
 Whose wealth was want ; whose plenty made him poor ;
 Who had enough, yet wish'd ever more.

Under the name of *Pleonectes*, *Avarice* cuts a rather ludicrous figure in Fletcher's poem. Like the character we have just been considering, he is an old man with patched garments and clouted shoon. He is equipped for battle as nearly as possible in accordance with the usages of chivalry, and since it was necessary to come out with the usual complement of armour, our venerable friend has exercised his ingenuity in achieving this result at the smallest cost. For this purpose he has laid the kitchen under contribution to an extent which might fully entitle him to the honourable cognomen of the Knight of the Dishclout. A helmet, we conceive, could not under any circumstances be the most comfortable of head-gear, as it could not accommodate itself to all the nodosities of the cranium, and must, therefore, while passing over some abrade others ; but the evil would be wofully aggravated if the helmet were to take the shape of a brass pot, as did that of *Pleonectes*. A dripping-pan may be very well adapted for a breastplate, a spit is a good substitute for a spear, as we learn from the duel at the inn between Roderick Random and Captain Weazel, and there may be worse shields than a large pot-lid. Whether or no, such were the offensive and defensive arms of *Pleonectes*. His pot-lid shield was embellished with the device of a close-sealed money-bag, under which was the motto, "Much better saved than spilled." In this instance, Fletcher, without rising to the dignity of his great master Spenser, has shown that he has a quaint humour and originality of his own, which it is to be regretted were not more frequently exhibited. Whenever the subject of misers comes under discussion, there always arises the question whether it is better for a man to be a miser or a spend-thrift? Upon this much has been said, and much no doubt remains to be said. That avarice is not inconsistent with a certain greatness and nobility of character we know from the practice and fame of Cæsar and Vespasian ; but with respect to extravagance and profusion, or, at all events, a lordly carelessness in money matters, they are thought to be not only compatible with, but the almost necessary concomitants of, a great mind. A miser harms himself more than anybody else, and he, no doubt, is so peculiarly constituted, that the simple hoarding of money is a greater pleasure to him than anything earthly that money could buy. His example is to a certain degree pernicious ; but he will neither offend the just prejudices of society by the practice of flagitious vices, nor will he corrupt many by the subtle influences of wealth. Like that Cardinal Angelot who used to steal the oats from the stables of his horses in the

dead of the night, he will cheat himself mostly, and will, as we well know, be the greatest loser by his own folly. Upon the sepulchre of Semiramis were engraved certain words to this effect, "What king soever shall want money, let him open this sepulchre and he shall find as much as he needs." Darius broke open this sepulchre, but instead of finding money found this inscription: "Except thou wert a wicked man and basely covetous, thou wouldst not have broken open this sepulchre."

Gluttony, one of the carnal sins, next demands our attention. In *Piers Ploughman* we find him on his way to confession, but in a very short time he is induced by the eloquence of his friend the brewer to turn aside and take a cup with his gossips at the alehouse. Entirely forgetting the object of his journey he soon enters into the spirit of the occasion, and joins with the rest in drinking, singing, and swearing. The description of the company at the alehouse reminds us of the style of Chaucer himself; and it may be gathered from thence what were at that time reckoned the dissolute classes—the tavern frequenters, brawlers, and profane swearers. In this goodly company Sir Glutton remains until long after the bell has tolled for vespers, he having by that time disposed of a gallon and a gill of ale. He gets up and proceeds as far as the door, after the manner of a blind gleeman's dog, that is to say, he persistently avoids the straight line, or the shortest distance between one place and another. When he gets to the door he falls down in a lethargic state, in which he remains for two days; and on awakening he makes haste to confession, and obtains absolution upon the faith of his many promises of amendment. There is not much to admire in this personification of gluttony, for the poet has only dealt with one phase of a vice which has at all times exhibited so many refinements and amplifications. It is a little singular, too, that beyond the introduction of a hermit among the company at the alehouse, we find no reflections upon the religious orders, who were notorious gluttons, insomuch that an old writer scrupled not to tell them that their religion was rather that of Epicurus than Christ; and another said, that if they were fed well, they cared for nothing else. In Dunbar's *Dance*, Gluttony is introduced as a foul monster with insatiable and greedy wame, who is followed by a crowd of drunkards, flourishing cups and cans, from which they drink to surfeit and excess, and also by a crew of useless tunbelled gourmands. In reply to their incessant cries for drink, the fiends pour hot lead into their ever-gaping mouths, thus producing extreme and burning heat, the very reverse of the punishment which Dante has described as afflicting the gluttons in the third circle of hell. They are tormented there by being compelled to lie in the mire under a ceaseless storm of hail, snow, and discoloured water, while Cerberus barks over them, preparatory to rending them in pieces. Spenser has drawn a very characteristic figure of Gluttony—a deformed, loathsome fellow, whose body is discoloured by numerous diseases, whose belly is upblown with luxury, whose eyes are swollen with fatness, and whose neck is of the long and crane-like description which is peculiarly adapted

for the purposes of feasting. It is believed that these crane-necked people preserve the taste of the delicacies they are devouring for a longer period than those not similarly endowed. Heliogabalus was, if we recollect aright, one of the long-necked tribe. Gluttony, who has a dirty pig for a charger, is clad, after the manner of Silenus, in vine-leaves, having upon his head a garland of ivy, in one hand a "boozing can," and in the other something to eat. His excesses have entirely unfitted him for worldly affairs, and have so besotted his senses that he seldom knows his friend from his foe.

It was well observed by Chaucer, with respect to the two vices of gluttony and lust, that "these two sins ben so nigh cosins that oft time they wol not depart." They have always been deemed inseparable by moralists, and are found together in all the productions concerning the deadly sins. In Piers Ploughman's *Vision*, Lust makes his confession, and sues for pardon upon condition of the self-imposed penance, that on every Saturday for seven years he shall drink pond-water with the ducks, and have but one meal. He confesses himself guilty both of the desire and the commission of uncleanness, of sinning by words, by clothing, by watching of the eyes, and by the arts of the seducer. The author has here again neglected an opportunity of rebuking the monks, who were at that time notorious for their excesses in this respect. Wickliff lifted up his voice against them, and accused them of studying the constitution and physiology of women for the purpose of bending ignorant females to their designs; and as to the state of things just before and at the time of the Reformation, we have ample information from Bale's *Acts of English Votaries*, and the "Reports of Henry's Commissioners." Dunbar has drawn a terribly graphic picture of Lust, who, dragging along his loathsome carcase and neighing like a horse, is led into the dance by Idleness, by which it is signified that the one is the offspring of the other. He has several companions with him, dead, as it were, in sin, whose features glow like the red fire of a burning torch. They all rush together into the dance, holding each other's tails and forming, as it were, an unbroken line of satyrs. Among Spenser's motley crew Lust comes riding on a goat, whose rugged hair and streaked and swollen eyes are like those of his burden. The rider, whose personal peculiarities seem to be imitated from the figure of Lust in Chaucer's "Court of Love," is black, rough, and filthy, and is clad in a green gown, which hides his uncleanness.

. . . In his hand a burning heart he bare,
Full of vain follies and new-fangleness;
For he was false and fraught with fickleness;
And learned had to love with secret looks;
And well could dance and sing with ruefulness
And fortunes tell; and read in loving books,
And thousand other ways to bait his fleshly hooks.

He passes his time in tempting women's hearts and trying to lure them from their "loyal loves," and his corrupt body and clouded intellect inspire us with the utmost horror and loathing of the vices which he personates.

In Idleness we have the last of the seven deadly sins. Piers Plough-

man's Sloth is a blear-eyed churl, only half-aroused from the torpidity induced by constant sleep. He gets no farther in his confession than *Benedicite*, when he begins to stretch himself, and forthwith commences snoring; but he is brought to, by the oburgations of Repentance, and proceeds with his recital. Although he has been priest and parson for thirty years, yet he can neither sing by note, nor can he read the Lives of the Saints. The ignorance of the monks has been a constant thorn of reproach with those who have busied themselves concerning the economy of monastical establishments. An old Harleian MS. says that the monks were so ignorant that they did not even understand what was read; that the canonical hours which they chanted were as a sealed book to them; and that in reading they put short accents for long ones, and *vice versâ*. One of the reasons given by an old abbot for wishing to resign his abbacy was, that out of fifteen monks only three understood their rule or the statutes of their religion; and that when he supplied them with grammars, so that they might learn, only two responded to his advances. Sloth declares that he cannot even say his paternoster after a priest; and although he knows nothing that ever was invented concerning our Lord and Lady—by which he refers to the miracle-plays and moralities—yet he can repeat all the idle ballads about Robin Hood or Randal of Chester. The Chester mysteries which are here referred to were so popular with the common people that they held equal ground with the Robin Hood ballads, which have always enjoyed a high estimation. Sloth's other accomplishments are an ability to turn up a hare in a field, or to hold a court-leet or court-baron for a knight. We leave this worthy gentleman for Dunbar's creation of Sloth. After having been twice called, he comes rolling into the dance like a sow out of a sty, accompanied by a huge rout of slovens, sluts, and sleepy rascals. These he drags along with a chain, lest they should all fall to the ground in sleep, while Belial lashes them with a bridle rein; but so slow of feet are they, in spite of the kind offices of Belial, that the attendant fiends raise the temperature, in order to quicken the pace. The ingenious gentleman who is said to have cured a gouty patient by placing him in a room without chair or other available interposing medium between the iron floor and his feet, and then gradually heating the floor until the forced capers of the victim wrought a cure of his malady, may perhaps have taken a hint from this passage in Dunbar. Dunbar, in concluding his poem, represents Mahound as crying for a Highland pageant, whereupon there ensues from the Highlanders such a terrific uproar and shouting in Erse, that the devil himself was—

So deaved with their yell
That in the deepest pot of hell
He smorit them with smook.

This satire upon the Highlanders is attributable to the ill-feeling which then existed between them and their Lowland neighbours, of whom Dunbar was one. Idleness rides forth from the house of Pride upon a slothful ass, and is clothed in the black habit and thin smock of a monk.

He carries a worn breviary, in which he reads but little, since he passes most of his days in sleep. He withdraws himself from all worldly cares and manly exercise, and claims immunity from work of every kind, "for contemplation sake," instead of which he spends all the time he can spare from sleep in riot and debauchery, by which he has brought upon himself a continual fever.

We have thus passed hastily through the several branches of the subject which we proposed to treat, and have necessarily been somewhat discursive, but if any person should wish to have a fit comment upon the whole matter, we recommend him to look out a portrait of the famous Abbé Maury, member of the Constituent Assembly, whose face is supposed to have been "an image of all the cardinal sins."

In Captivity.

[Captain Cameron, who has been so long imprisoned in Abyssinia, has sent us the following verses, with an urgent request that we should publish them, with his notes.]

SKOAL!

TO HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

I thank thee, Friend, for this bold song,*
Which thrill'd my burning veins along,
When, madden'd 'neath the sense of wrong,
I wrung the cutting gyves and strong,
That eat these free-born limbs.†

Bleeding at heart, I work'd each link,
Till ev'n as spear-stabb'd leopards slink,
To cool them by soft Mareb's‡ brink,
So, wild and worn, I turn'd to drink
The solace of thy hymns.

They spake like Jesu, "Be thou whole"—
But lo, the mystic fennel bowl,

* "The Goblet of Life"—see Longfellow's Poems.

† Chains round the ankles eat the limb internally. The sinews shrink, so that the ankle becomes a mere stick. The calf, at the same time, wears away—and gradually retires—perhaps three inches higher than it was before chaining, and its dimensions above decrease in proportion.

‡ Mareb, a river which, rising in Abyssinia, loses itself in the Eastern Sahara. Its waters, filtered through white sand, are singularly soft and sweet. The Sahara; like its sister Lybia, is "arida nutrix leonum,"—and no traveller can pass through without an adventure either with lion or leopard.

That erst must quaff the troubled soul ;—
 I seize it, and return thy Skoal,*
 From honest heart and free,—

"All scathe to me is Freedom's gain—
 Then welcome hunger, shame, and pain ;
 Yet sing, my Friend, a gallant strain—
 Afric shall sooner cast her chain
 For this our misery."†

MAGDALA PRISON, 27th December, 1865.

C. D. C

* Like Longfellow, the writer has drunk many a Skoal in Sweden, so this is no affectation.

† The slave trade is carried on with a high hand in Upper Egypt, and along the west coast of the Red Sea.

The writer may, hereafter, furnish the public with statistics on the subject. There are about fourteen hundred slaves passed through Massowah alone to Capota and Djedda.

When the writer was at Massowah, a Greek merchant there, M. Aristide, entertained the plan of purchasing up a number of these, and accompanying them to their respective homes. His object was not philanthropical, but had in view the conciliation of the distant Galla tribes, to the end of establishing trading stations among them. A practical nation, like England, might safely take the same view on a large scale, being assured that the suppression of the slave trade would necessarily lead to the development of legitimate commerce. At present, a hatred of the white Christian is sedulously instilled into the minds of the Gallas, by the slave merchant, who represents us as cannibals, for his own purposes.

When the writer was in the Soudan, he stopped, by authority, a whole caravan of slaves. They all, the girls especially, burst into tears, imagining that they were to be roasted and eaten forthwith.

The slave trade is forbidden in Abyssinia, though the law is sometimes evaded, slaves being often passed through to be sold at the coast. But there is no open traffic in human beings in Abyssinia itself,—rotten as the Christianity of Abyssinia is, it has, at least, produced this good effect. But, as among the Jews, prisoners of war are retained as servants, and after baptism, for they generally adopt the religion of their masters, treated on the same footing as menials of the country.

There are many hundred Christian slaves, Abyssinians by birth, scattered throughout the Soudan. They are kidnapped by the border tribes.



' DID HE NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST HER?

THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

JUNE, 1866.

The Claverings.

CHAPTER XIII.

A VISITOR CALLS AT ONGAR PARK.



It will be remembered that Harry Clavering, on returning one evening to his lodgings in Bloomsbury Square, had been much astonished at finding there the card of Count Pateroff, a man of whom he had only heard, up to that moment, as the friend of the late Lord Ongar. At first he had been very angry with Lady Ongar, thinking that she and this count were in some league together, some league of which he would greatly disapprove; but his anger had given place to a new interest when he learned direct from herself that she had not seen the count, and that she was simply anxious that he, as her friend, should have an interview with the man. He had then become very eager in the matter, offering to subject himself to any amount of inconvenience so that he might effect that which Lady Ongar asked of him. He was not, however, called upon to endure,

any special trouble or expense, as he heard nothing more from Count Pateroff till he had been back in London for two or three weeks.

Lady Ongar's statement to him had been quite true. It had been even more than true; for when she had written she had not even heard directly from the count. She had learned by letter from another person that Count Pateroff was in London, and had then communicated the fact to her friend. This other person was a sister of the count's, who was now living in London, one Madame Gordeloup,—Sophie Gordeloup,—a lady whom Harry had found sitting in Lady Ongar's room when last he had seen her in Bolton Street. He had not then heard her name; nor was he aware then, or for some time subsequently, that Count Pateroff had any relative in London.

Lady Ongar had been a fortnight in the country before she received Madame Gordeloup's letter. In that letter the sister had declared herself to be most anxious that her brother should see Lady Ongar. The letter had been in French, and had been very eloquent,—more eloquent in its cause than any letter with the same object could have been if written by an Englishwoman in English; and the eloquence was less offensive than it might, under all concurrent circumstances, have been had it reached Lady Ongar in English. The reader must not, however, suppose that the letter contained a word that was intended to support a lover's suit. It was very far indeed from that, and spoke of the count simply as a friend; but its eloquence went to show that nothing that had passed should be construed by Lady Ongar as offering any bar to a fair friendship. What the world said!—Bah! Did not she know,—she, Sophie,—and did not her friend know,—her friend Julie,—that the world was a great liar? Was it not even now telling wicked venomous lies about her friend Julie? Why mind what the world said, seeing that the world could not be brought to speak one word of truth? The world indeed! Bah!

But Lady Ongar, though she was not as yet more than half as old as Madame Gordeloup, knew what she was about almost as well as that lady knew what Sophie Gordeloup was doing. Lady Ongar had known the count's sister in France and Italy, having seen much of her in one of those sudden intimacies to which English people are subject when abroad; and she had been glad to see Madame Gordeloup in London,—much more glad than she would have been had she been received there on her return by a crowd of loving native friends. But not on that account was she prepared to shape her conduct in accordance with her friend Sophie's advice, and especially not so when that advice had reference to Sophie's brother. She had, therefore, said very little in return to the lady's eloquence, answering the letter on that matter very vaguely; but, having a purpose of her own, had begged that Count Pateroff might be asked to call upon Harry Clavering. Count Pateroff did not feel himself to care very much about Harry Clavering, but wishing to do as he was bidden, did leave his card in Bloomsbury Square.

And why was Lady Ongar anxious that the young man who was her

friend should see the man who had been her husband's friend, and whose name had been mixed with her own in so grievous a manner? She had called Harry her friend, and it might be that she desired to give this friend every possible means of testing the truth of that story which she herself had told. The reader, perhaps, will hardly have believed in Lady Ongar's friendship;—will, perhaps, have believed neither the friendship nor the story. If so, the reader will have done her wrong, and will not have read her character aright. The woman was not heartless because she had once, in one great epoch of her life, betrayed her own heart; nor was she altogether false because she had once lied; nor altogether vile, because she had once taught herself that, for such an one as her, riches were a necessity. It might be that the punishment of her sin could meet with no remission in this world, but not on that account should it be presumed that there was no place for repentance left to her.

As she walked alone through the shrubberies at Ongar Park she thought much of those other paths at Clavering, and of the walks in which she had not been alone; and she thought of that interview in the garden when she had explained to Harry,—as she had then thought so successfully,—that they two, each being poor, were not fit to love and marry each other. She had brooded over all that, too, during the long hours of her sad journey home to England. She was thinking of it still when she had met him, and had been so cold to him on the platform of the railway station, when she had sent him away angry because she had seemed to slight him. She had thought of it as she had sat in her London room, telling him the terrible tale of her married life, while her eyes were fixed on his and her head was resting on her hands. Even then, at that moment, she was asking herself whether he believed her story, or whether, within his breast, he was saying that she was vile and false. She knew that she had been false to him, and that he must have despised her when, with her easy philosophy, she had made the best of her own mercenary perfidy. He had called her a jilt to her face, and she had been able to receive the accusation with a smile. Would he now call her something worse, and with a louder voice, within his own bosom? And if she could convince him that to that accusation she was not fairly subject, might the old thing come back again? Would he walk with her again, and look into her eyes as though he only wanted her commands to show himself ready to be her slave? She was a widow, and had seen many things, but even now she had not reached her six-and-twentieth year.

The apples at her rich country-seat had quickly become ashes between her teeth, but something of the juice of the fruit might yet reach her palate if he would come and sit with her at the table. As she complained to herself of the coldness of the world, she thought that she would not care how cold might be all the world if there might be but one whom she could love, and who would love her. And him she had loved. To him, in old days,—in days which now seemed to her to be very old,—she had made confession of her love. Old as were those days, it could not be but

he should still remember them. She had loved him, and him only. To none other had she ever pretended love. From none other had love been offered to her. Between her and that wretched being to whom she had sold herself, who had been half dead before she had seen him, there had been no pretence of love. But Harry Clavering she had loved. Harry Clavering was a man, with all those qualities which she valued, and also with those foibles which saved him from being too perfect for so slight a creature as herself. Harry had been offended to the quick, and had called her a jilt; but yet it might be possible that he would return to her.

It should not be supposed that since her return to England she had had one settled, definite object before her eyes with regard to this renewal of her love. There had been times in which she had thought that she would go on with the life which she had prepared for herself, and that she would make herself contented, if not happy, with the price which had been paid to her. And there were other times, in which her spirits sank low within her, and she told herself that no contentment was any longer possible to her. She looked at herself in the glass, and found herself to be old and haggard. Harry, she said, was the last man in the world to sell himself for wealth, when there was no love remaining. Harry would never do as she had done with herself! Not for all the wealth that woman ever inherited,—so she told herself,—would he link himself to one who had made herself vile and tainted among women! In this, I think, she did him no more than justice, though it may be that in some other matters she rated his character too highly. Of Florence Burton she had as yet heard nothing, though had she heard of her, it may well be that she would not on that account have desisted. Such being her thoughts and her hopes, she had written to Harry, begging him to see this man who had followed her,—she knew not why,—from Italy; and had told the sister simply that she could not do as she was asked, because she was away from London, alone in a country house.

And quite alone she was sitting one morning, counting up her misery, feeling that the apples were, in truth, ashes, when a servant came to her, telling her that there was a gentleman in the hall desirous of seeing her. The man had the visitor's card in his hand, but before she could read the name, the blood had mounted into her face as she told herself that it was Harry Clavering. There was joy for a moment at her heart; but she must not show it,—not as yet. She had been but four months a widow, and he should not have come to her in the country. She must see him and in some way make him understand this,—but she would be very gentle with him. Then her eye fell upon the card, and she saw, with grievous disappointment, that it bore the name of Count Pateroff. No;—she was not going to be caught in that way. Let the result be what it might, she would not let Sophie Gordeloup, or Sophie's brother, get the better of her by such a ruse as that! "Tell the gentleman, with my compliments," she said, as she handed back the card, "that I regret it greatly, but I can see no one now." Then the servant went away, and she sat wondering whether the count would be able

to make his way into her presence. She felt rather than knew that she had some reason to fear him. All that had been told of him and of her had been false. No accusation brought against her had contained one spark of truth. But there had been things between Lord Ongar and this man which she would not care to have told openly in England. And though, in his conduct to her, he had been customarily courteous, and on one occasion had been generous, still she feared him. She would much rather that he should have remained in Italy. And though, when all alone in Bolton Street, she had in her desolation welcomed his sister Sophie, she would have preferred that Sophie should not have come to her, claiming to renew their friendship. But with the count she would hold no communion now, even though he should find his way into the room.

A few minutes passed before the servant returned, and then he brought a note with him. As the door opened Lady Ongar rose, ready to leave the room by another passage ; but she took the note and read it. It was as follows :—"I cannot understand why you should refuse to see me, and I feel aggrieved. My present purpose is to say a few words to you on private matters connected with papers that belonged to Lord Ongar. I still hope that you will admit me.—P." Having read these words while standing, she made an effort to think what might be the best course for her to follow. As for Lord Ongar's papers, she did not believe in the plea. Lord Ongar could have had no papers interesting to her in such a manner as to make her desirous of seeing this man or of hearing of them in private. Lord Ongar, though she had nursed him to the hour of his death, earning her price, had been her bitterest enemy ; and though there had been something about this count that she had respected, she had known him to be a man of intrigue and afraid of no falsehoods in his intrigues,—a dangerous man, who might perhaps now and again do a generous thing, but one who would expect payment for his generosity. Besides, had he not been named openly as her lover ? She wrote to him, therefore, as follows :—"Lady Ongar presents her compliments to Count Pateroff, and finds it to be out of her power to see him at present." This answer the visitor took and walked away from the front door without showing any disgust to the servant, either by his demeanour or in his countenance. On that evening, she received from him a long letter, written at the neighbouring inn, expostulating with her as to her conduct towards him, and saying in the last line, that it was "impossible now that they should be strangers to each other." "Impossible, that we should be strangers," she said almost out loud. "Why impossible ? I know no such impossibility." After that she carefully burned both the letter and the note.

She remained at Ongar Park something over six weeks, and then, about the beginning of May, she went back to London. No one had been to see her, except Mr. Sturm, the clergyman of the parish ; and he, though something almost approaching to an intimacy had sprung up between them, had never yet spoken to her of his wife. She was not

quite sure whether her rank might not deter him,—whether under such circumstances as those now in question, the ordinary social rules were not ordinarily broken,—whether a countess should not call on a clergyman's wife first, although the countess might be the stranger; but she did not dare to do as she would have done, had no blight attached itself to her name. She gave, therefore, no hint; she said no word of Mrs. Sturm, though her heart was longing for a kind word from some woman's mouth. But she allowed herself to feel no anger against the husband, and went through her parish work, thanking him for his assistance.

Of Mr. Giles she had seen very little, and since her misfortune with Enoch Gubby, she had made no further attempt to interfere with the wages of the persons employed. Into the houses of some of the poor she had made her way, but she fancied that they were not glad to see her. They might, perhaps, have all heard of her reputation, and Gubby's daughter may have congratulated herself that there was another in the parish as bad as herself, or perhaps, happily, worse. The owner of all the wealth around strove to make Mrs. Button become a messenger of charity between herself and some of the poor; but Mrs. Button altogether declined the employment, although, as her mistress had ascertained, she herself performed her own little missions of charity with zeal. Before the fortnight was over, Lady Ongar was sick of her house and her park, utterly disregarding of her horses and oxen, and unmindful even of the pleasant stream which in these spring days rippled softly at the bottom of her gardens.

She had undertaken to be back in London early in May, by appointment with her lawyer, and had unfortunately communicated the fact to Madame Gordeloup. Four or five days before she was due in Bolton Street, her mindful Sophie, with unerring memory, wrote to her, declaring her readiness to do all and anything that the most diligent friendship could prompt. Should she meet her dear Julie at the station in London? Should she bring any special carriage? Should she order any special dinner in Bolton Street? She herself would of course come to Bolton Street, if not allowed to be present at the station. It was still chilly in the evenings, and she would have fires lit. Might she suggest a roast fowl and some bread sauce, and perhaps a sweetbread,—and just one glass of champagne? And might she share the banquet? There was not a word in the note about the too obtrusive brother, either as to the offence committed by him, or the offence felt by him.

The little Franco-Polish woman was there in Bolton Street, of course,—for Lady Ongar had not dared to refuse her. A little, dry, bright woman she was, with quick eyes, and thin lips, and small nose, and mean forehead, and scanty hair drawn back quite tightly from her face and head; very dry, but still almost pretty with her quickness and her brightness. She was fifty, was Sophie Gordeloup, but she had so managed her years that she was as active on her limbs as most women are at twenty-five. And the chicken and the bread-sauce, and the sweetbread, and the cham-

pagne were there, all very good of their kind; for Sophie Gordeloup liked such things to be good, and knew how to indulge her own appetite, and to coax that of another person.

Some little satisfaction Lady Ongar received from the fact that she was not alone; but the satisfaction was not satisfactory. When Sophie had left her at ten o'clock, running off by herself to her lodgings in Mount Street, Lady Ongar, after but one moment's thought, sat down and wrote a note to Harry Clavering.

"DEAR HARRY,—I am back in town. Pray come and see me to-morrow evening.

Yours ever,

"J. O."

CHAPTER XIV.

COUNT PATEROFF AND HIS SISTER.

AFTER an interval of some weeks, during which Harry had been down at Clavering and had returned again to his work at the Adelphi, Count Pateroff called again in Bloomsbury Square;—but Harry was at Mr. Beilby's office. Harry at once returned the count's visit at the address given in Mount Street. Madame was at home, said the servant-girl, from which Harry was led to suppose that the count was a married man; but Harry felt that he had no right to intrude upon madame, so he simply left his card. Wishing, however, really to have this interview, and having been lately elected at a club of which he was rather proud, he wrote to the count asking him to dine with him at the Beaufort. He explained that there was a strangers' room,—which Pateroff knew very well, having often dined at the Beaufort,—and said something as to a private little dinner for two, thereby apologizing for proposing to the count to dine without other guests. Pateroff accepted the invitation, and Harry, never having done such a thing before, ordered his dinner with much nervousness.

The count was punctual, and the two men introduced themselves. Harry had expected to see a handsome foreigner, with black hair, polished whiskers, and probably a hook nose,—forty years of age or thereabouts, but so got up as to look not much more than thirty. But his guest was by no means a man of that stamp. Excepting that the count's age was altogether uncertain, no correctness of guess on that matter being possible by means of his appearance, Harry's preconceived notion was wrong in every point. He was a fair man, with a broad fair face, and very light blue eyes; his forehead was low, but broad; he wore no whiskers, but bore on his lip a heavy moustache which was not grey, but perfectly white—white it was with years of course, but yet it gave no sign of age to his face. He was well made, active, and somewhat broad in the shoulders, though rather below the middle height. But for a certain ease of manner which he possessed, accompanied by something of restlessness in his eye, any one would have taken him for an Englishman. And his speech hardly

betrayed that he was not English. Harry, knowing that he was a foreigner, noticed now and again some little acquired distinctness of speech which is hardly natural to a native; but otherwise there was nothing in his tongue to betray him.

"I am sorry that you should have had so much trouble," he said, shaking hands with Harry. Clavering declared that he had incurred no trouble, and declared also that he would be only too happy to have taken any trouble in obeying a behest from his friend Lady Ongar. Had he been a Pole as was the count, he would not have forgotten to add that he would have been equally willing to exert himself with the view of making the count's acquaintance; but being simply a young Englishman, he was much too awkward for any such courtesy as that. The count observed the omission, smiled, and bowed. Then he spoke of the weather, and said that London was a magnificent city. Oh, yes, he knew London well,—had known it these twenty years;—had been for fifteen years a member of the Travellers';—he liked everything English, except hunting. English hunting he had found to be dull work. But he liked shooting for an hour or two. He could not rival, he said, the intense energy of an Englishman, who would work all day with his guns harder than ploughmen with their ploughs. Englishmen sported, he said, as though more than their bread,—as though their honour, their wives, their souls, depended on it. It was very fine! He often wished that he was an Englishman. Then he shrugged his shoulders.

Harry was very anxious to commence a conversation about Lady Ongar, but he did not know how at first to introduce her name. Count Pateroff had come to him at Lady Ongar's request, and therefore, as he thought, the count should have been the first to mention her. But the count seemed to be enjoying his dinner without any thought either of Lady Ongar or of her late husband. At this time he had been down to Ongar Park, on that mission which had been, as we know, futile; but he said no word of that to Harry. He seemed to enjoy his dinner thoroughly, and made himself very agreeable. When the wine was discussed he told Harry that a certain vintage of Moselle was very famous at the Beaufort. Harry ordered the wine of course, and was delighted to give his guest the best of everything; but he was a little annoyed at finding that the stranger knew his club better than he knew it himself. Slowly the count ate his dinner, enjoying every morsel that he took with that thoughtful, conscious pleasure which young men never attain in eating and drinking, and which men as they grow older so often forget to acquire. But the count never forgot any of his own capacities for pleasure, and in all things made the most of his own resources. To be rich is not to have one or ten thousand a year, but to be able to get out of that one or ten thousand all that every pound, and every shilling, and every penny will give you. After this fashion the count was a rich man.

"You don't sit after dinner here, I suppose," said the count, when he had completed an elaborate washing of his mouth and moustache. "I

like this club because we who are strangers have so charming a room for our smoking. It is the best club in London for men who do not belong to it."

It occurred to Harry that in the smoking-room there could be no privacy. Three or four men had already spoken to the count, showing that he was well known, giving notice, as it were, that Pateroff would become a public man when once he was placed in a public circle. To have given a dinner to the count, and to have spoken no word to him about Lady Ongar, would be by no means satisfactory to Harry's feelings, though, as it appeared, it might be sufficiently satisfactory to the guest. Harry therefore suggested one bottle of claret. The count agreed, expressing an opinion that the 51 Lafitte was unexceptional. The 51 Lafitte was ordered, and Harry, as he filled his glass, considered the way in which his subject should be introduced.

"You knew Lord Ongar, I think, abroad?"

"Lord Ongar,—abroad! Oh, yes, very well; and for many years here in London; and at Vienna; and very early in life at St. Petersburg. I knew Lord Ongar first in Russia when he was attached to the embassy as Frederic Courton. His father, Lord Courton, was then alive, as was also his grandfather. He was a nice, good-looking lad then."

"As regards his being nice, he seems to have changed a good deal before he died." Thus the count noticed by simply shrugging his shoulders and smiling as he sipped his wine. "By all that I can hear he became a horrid brute when he married," said Harry, energetically.

"He was not pleasant when he was ill at Florence," said the count.

"She must have had a terrible time with him," said Harry.

The count put up his hands, again shrugged his shoulders, and then shook his head. "She knew he was no longer an Adonis when he married her."

"An Adonis! No; she did not expect an Adonis; but she thought he would have something of the honour and feelings of a man."

"She found it uncomfortable, no doubt. He did too much of this, you know," said the count, raising his glass to his lips; "and he didn't do it with 51 Lafitte. That was Ongar's fault. All the world knew it for the last ten years. No one knew it better than Hugh Clavering."

"But—" said Harry, and then he stopped. He hardly knew what it was that he wished to learn from the man, though he certainly did wish to learn something. He had thought that the count would himself have talked about Lady Ongar and those Florentine days, but this he did not seem disposed to do. "Shall we have our cigars now?" said Count Pateroff.

"One moment, if you don't mind."

"Certainly, certainly... There is no hurry."

"You will take no more wine?"

"No more wine. I take my wine at dinner, as you saw."

"I want to ask you one special question,—about Lady Ongar."

"I will say anything in her favour that you please. I am always ready to say anything in the favour of any lady, and, if needs be, to swear it. But anything against any lady nobody ever heard me say."

Harry was sharp enough to perceive that any assertion made under such a stipulation was worse than nothing. It was as when a man, in denying the truth of a statement, does so with an assurance that on that subject he should consider himself justified in telling any number of lies. "I did not write the book,—but you have no right to ask the question ; and I should say that I had not, even if I had." Pateroff was speaking of Lady Ongar in this way, and Harry hated him for doing so.

"I don't want you to say any good of her," said he, "or any evil."

"I certainly shall say no evil of her."

"But I think you know that she has been most cruelly treated."

"Well, there is about seven—thousand—pounds a year, I think ! Seven—thousand—a year ! Not francs, but pounds ! We poor foreigners lose ourselves in amazement when we hear about your English fortunes. Seven thousand pounds a year for a lady all alone, and a beautiful house ! A house so beautiful, they tell me !"

"What has that to do with it ?" said Harry ; whereupon the count again shrugged his shoulders. "What has that to do with it ? Because the man was rich he was not justified in ill-treating his wife. Did he not bring false accusations against her, in order that he might rob her after his death of all that of which you think so much ? Did he not bear false witness against her, to his own dishonour ?"

"She has got the money, I think,—and the beautiful house."

"But her name has been covered with lies."

"What can I do ? Why do you ask me ? I know nothing. Look here, Mr. Clavering, if you want to make any inquiry you had better go to my sister. I don't see what good it will do, but she will talk to you by the hour together, if you wish it. Let us smoke."

"Your sister ?"

"Yes, my sister. Madame Gordeloup is her name. Has not Lady Ongar mentioned my sister ? They are inseparables. My sister lives in Mount Street."

"With you ?"

"No, not with me ; I do not live in Mount Street. I have my address sometimes at her house."

"Madame Gordeloup ?"

"Yes, Madame Gordeloup. She is Lady Ongar's friend. She will talk to you."

"Will you introduce me, Count Pateroff ?"

"Oh, no ; it is not necessary. You can go to Mount Street, and she will be delighted. There is the card. And now we will smoke." Harry felt that he could not, with good-breeding, detain the count any longer, and, therefore, rising from his chair, led the way into the smoking-room. When there, the man of the world separated himself from his young friend, of whose enthusiasm he had perhaps had enough, and was soon engaged in conversation with sundry other men of his own standing. Harry soon perceived that his guest had no further need of his coun-

tenance, and went home to Bloomsbury Square by no means satisfied with his new acquaintance.

On the next day he dined in Onslow Crescent with the Burtons, and when there he said nothing about Lady Ongar or Count Pateroff. He was not aware that he had any special reason for being silent on the subject, but he made up his mind that the Burtons were people so far removed in their sphere of life from Lady Ongar, that the subject would not be suitable in Onslow Crescent. It was his lot in life to be concerned with people of the two classes. He did not at all mean to say,—even to himself,—that he liked the Ongar class the better; but still, as such was his lot, he must take it as it came, and entertain both subjects of interest, without any commingling of them one with another. Of Lady Ongar and his early love he had spoken to Florence at some length, but he did not find it necessary in his letters to tell her anything of Count Pateroff and his dinner at the Beaufort. Nor did he mention the dinner to his dear friend Cecilia. On this occasion he made himself very happy in Onslow Crescent, playing with the children, chatting with his friend, and enduring, with a good grace, Theodore Burton's sarcasm, when that ever-studious gentleman told him that he was only fit to go about tied to a woman's apron-string.

On the following day, about five o'clock, he called in Mount Street. He had doubted much as to this, thinking that at any rate he ought, in the first place, to write and ask permission. But at last he resolved that he would take the count at his word, and presenting himself at the door, he sent up his name. Madame Gordeloup was at home, and in a few moments he found himself in the room in which the lady was sitting, and recognized her whom he had seen with Lady Ongar in Bolton Street. She got up at once, having glanced at the name upon the card, and seemed to know all about him. She shook hands with him cordially, almost squeezing his hand, and bade him sit down near her on the sofa. "She was so glad to see him, for her dear Julie's sake. Julie, as of course he knew, was at 'Ongere' Park. Oh! so happy,"—which, by the by, he did not know,— "and would be up in the course of next week. So many things to do, of course, Mr. Clavering. The house, and the servants, and the park, and the beautiful things of a large country establishment! But it was delightful, and Julie was quite happy!"

No people could be more unlike to each other than this brother and his sister. No human being could have taken Madame Gordeloup for an Englishwoman, though it might be difficult to judge, either from her language or her appearance, of the nationality to which she belonged. She spoke English with great fluency, but every word uttered declared her not to be English. And when she was most fluent she was most incorrect in her language. She was small, eager, and quick, and appeared quite as anxious to talk as her brother had been to hold his tongue. She lived in a small room on the first floor of a small house; and it seemed to Harry that she lived alone. But he had not been long there before she

had told him all her history, and explained to him most of her circumstances. That she kept back something is probable; but how many are there who can afford to tell everything?

Her husband was still living, but he was at St. Petersburg. He was a Frenchman by family, but had been born in Russia. He had been attached to the Russian embassy in London, but was now attached to diplomacy in general in Russia. She did not join him because she loved England,—oh, so much! And, perhaps, her husband might come back again some day. She did not say that she had not seen him for ten years, and was not quite sure whether he was dead or alive; but had she made a clean breast in all things, she might have done so. She said that she was a good deal still at the Russian embassy; but she did not say that she herself was a paid spy. Nor do I say so now, positively; but that was the character given to her by many who knew her. She called her brother Edouard, as though Harry had known the count all his life; and always spoke of Lady Ongar as Julie. She uttered one or two little hints which seemed to imply that she knew everything that had passed between “Julie” and Harry Clavering in early days; and never mentioned Lord Ongar without some term of violent abuse.

“Horrid wretch!” she said, pausing over all the *r*’s in the name she had called him. “It began, you know, from the very first. Of course he had been a fool. An old roué is always a fool to marry. What does he get, you know, for his money? A pretty face. He’s tired of that as soon as it’s his own. Is it not so, Mr. Clavering? But other people ain’t tired of it, and then he becomes jealous. But Lord Ongar was not jealous. He was not man enough to be jealous. Hor-r-rid wr-retch!” She then went on telling many things which, as he listened, almost made Harry Clavering’s hair stand on end, and which must not be repeated here. She herself had met her brother in Paris, and had been with him when they encountered the Ongars in that capital. According to her showing, they had, all of them, been together nearly from that time to the day of Lord Ongar’s death. But Harry soon learned to feel that he could not believe all that the little lady told him.

“Edouard was always with him. Poor Edouard!” she said. “There was some money matter between them about écarté. When that wr-retch got to be so bad, he did not like parting with his money,—not even when he had lost it! And Julie had been so good always! Julie and Edouard had done everything for the nasty wr-retch.” Harry did not at all like this mingling of the name of Julie and Edouard, though it did not for a moment fill his mind with any suspicion as to Lady Ongar. It made him feel, however, that this woman was dangerous, and that her tongue might be very mischievous if she talked to others as she did to him. As he looked at her,—and being now in her own room she was not dressed with scrupulous care,—and as he listened to her, he could not conceive what Lady Ongar had seen in her that she should have made a friend of her. Her brother, the count, was undoubtedly a gentleman in his

manners and way of life, but he did not know by what name to call this woman, who called Lady Ongar Julie. She was altogether unlike any ladies whom he had known.

"You know that Julie will be in town next week?"

"No; I did not know when she was to return."

"Oh, yes; she has business with those people in South Audley Street on Thursday. Poor dear! Those lawyers are so harassing! But when people have seven—thousand—pounds a year, they must put up with lawyers." As she pronounced those talismanic words, which to her were almost celestial, Harry perceived for the first time that there was some sort of resemblance between her and the count. He could see that they were brother and sister. "I shall go to her directly she comes, and of course I will tell her how good you have been to come to me. And Edouard has been dining with you? How good of you. He told me how charming you are,"—Harry was quite sure then that she was fibbing,—
"and that it was so pleasant! Edouard is very much attached to Julie; very much. Though, of course, all that was mere nonsense; just lies told by that wicked lord. Bah! what did he know?" Harry by this time was beginning to wish that he had never found his way to Mount Street.

"Of course they were lies," he said roughly.

"Of course, mon cher. Those things always are lies, and so wicked! What good do they do?"

"Lies never do any good," said Harry.

To so wide a proposition as this madame was not prepared to give an unconditional assent; she therefore shrugged her shoulders and once again looked like her brother.

"Ah!" she said. "Julie is a happy woman now. Seven—thousand—pounds a year! One does not know how to believe it; does one?"

"I never heard the amount of her income," said Harry.

"It is all that," said the Franco-Pole, energetically, "every franc of it, besides the house! I know it. She told me herself. Yes. What woman would risk that, you know; and his life, you may say, as good as gone? Of course they were lies."

"I don't think you understand her, Madame Gordeloup."

"Oh, yes; I know her, so well. And love her—oh, Mr. Clavering, I love her so dearly! Is she not charming? So beautiful you know, and grand. Such a will, too! That is what I like in a woman. Such a courage! She never flinched in those horrid days, never. And when he called her,—you know what,—she only looked at him, just looked at him, miserable object. Oh, it was beautiful!" And Madame Gordeloup, rising in her energy from her seat for the purpose, strove to throw upon Harry such another glance as the injured, insulted wife had thrown upon her foul-tongued, dying lord.

"She will marry," said Madame Gordeloup, changing her tone with a suddenness that made Harry start; "yes, she will marry of course.

Your English widows always marry if they have money. They are wrong, and she will be wrong; but she will marry."

"I do not know how that may be," said Harry, looking foolish.

"I tell you I know she will marry, Mr. Clavering; I told Edouard so yesterday. He merely smiled. It would hardly do for him, she has so much will. Edouard has a will also."

"All men have, I suppose."

"Ah, yes; but there is a difference. A sum of money down, if a man is to marry, is better than a widow's dower. If she dies, you know, he looks so foolish. And she is grand and will want to spend everything. Is she much older than you, Mr. Clavering? Of course I know Julie's age, though perhaps you do not. What will you give me to tell?" And the woman leered at him with a smile which made Harry think that she was almost more than mortal. He found himself quite unable to cope with her in conversation, and soon after this got up to take his leave. "You will come again," she said. "Do. I like you so much. And when Julie is in town, we shall be able to see her together, and I will be your friend. Believe me."

Harry was very far from believing her, and did not in the least require her friendship. Her friendship indeed! How could any decent English man or woman wish for the friendship of such a creature as that? It was thus that he thought of her as he walked away from Mount Street, making heavy accusations, within his own breast, against Lady Ongar as he did so. Julia! He repeated the name over to himself a dozen times, thinking that the flavour of it was lost since it had been contaminated so often by that vile tongue. But what concern was it of his? Let her be Julia to whom she would, she could never be Julia again to him. But she was his friend—Lady Ongar, and he told himself plainly that his friend had been wrong in having permitted herself to hold any intimacy with such a woman as that. No doubt Lady Ongar had been subjected to very trying troubles in the last months of her husband's life, but no circumstances could justify her, if she continued to endorse the false cordiality of that horribly vulgar and evil-minded little woman. As regarded the grave charges brought against Lady Ongar, Harry still gave no credit to them, still looked upon them as calumnies, in spite of the damning advocacy of Sophie and her brother; but he felt that she must have dabbled in very dirty water to have returned to England with such claimants on her friendship as these. He had not much admired the count, but the count's sister had been odious to him. "I will be your friend. Believe me." Harry Clavering stamped upon the pavement as he thought of the little Pole's offer to him. She be his friend! No, indeed;—not if there were no other friend for him in all London.

Sophie, too, had her thoughts about him. Sophie was very anxious in this matter, and was resolved to stick as close to her Julie as possible. "I will be his friend or his enemy;—let him choose." That had been Sophie's reflection on the matter when she was left alone.

CHAPTER XV.

AN EVENING IN BOLTON STREET.

TEN days after his visit in Mount Street, Harry received the note which Lady Ongar had written to him on the night of her arrival in London. It was brought to Mr. Beilby's office by her own footman early in the morning; but Harry was there at the time, and was thus able to answer it, telling Lady Ongar that he would come as she had desired. She had commenced her letter "Dear Harry," and he well remembered that when she had before written she had called him "Dear Mr. Clavering." And though the note contained only half-a-dozen ordinary words, it seemed to him to be affectionate, and almost loving. Had she not been eager to see him, she would hardly thus have written to him on the very instant of her return. "Dear Lady Ongar," he wrote, "I shall dine at my club, and be with you about eight. Yours always, H. C." After that he could hardly bring himself to work satisfactorily during the whole day. Since his interview with the Franco-Polish lady he had thought a good deal about himself, and had resolved to work harder and to love Florence Burton more devotedly than ever. The nasty little woman had said certain words to him which had caused him to look into his own breast and to tell himself that this was necessary. As the love was easier than the work, he began his new tasks on the following morning by writing a long and very affectionate letter to his own Flo, who was still staying at Clavering rectory;—a letter so long and so affectionate that Florence, in her ecstasy of delight, made Fanny read it, and confess that, as a love-letter, it was perfect.

"It's great nonsense, all the same," said Fanny.

"It isn't nonsense at all," said Florence; "and if it were, it would not signify. Is it true? That's the question."

"I'm sure it's true," said Fanny.

"And so am I," said Florence. "I don't want any one to tell me that."

"Then why did you ask, you simpleton?" Florence indeed was having a happy time of it at Clavering rectory. When Fanny called her a simpleton, she threw her arms round Fanny's neck and kissed her.

And Harry kept his resolve about the work too, investigating plans with a resolution to understand them which was almost successful. During those days he would remain at his office till past four o'clock, and would then walk away with Theodore Burton, dining sometimes in Onslow Crescent, and going there sometimes in the evening after dinner. And when there he would sit and read; and once when Cecilia essayed to talk to him, he told her to keep her apron-strings to herself. Then Theodore laughed and apologized, and Cecilia said that too much work made Jack a dull boy; and then Theodore laughed again, stretching out his legs and arms as he rested a moment from his own study, and declared that, under those circumstances, Harry never would be dull. And Harry, on those

evenings, would be taken upstairs to see the bairns in their cots; and as he stood with their mother looking down upon the children, pretty words would be said about Florence and his future life; and all was going merry as a marriage bell. But on that morning, when the note had come from Lady Ongar, Harry could work no more to his satisfaction. He scrawled upon his blotting-paper, and made no progress whatsoever towards the understanding of anything. It was the day on which, in due course, he would write to Florence; and he did write to her. But Florence did not show this letter to Fanny, claiming for it any meed of godlike perfection. It was a stupid, short letter, in which he declared that he was very busy, and that his head ached. In a postscript he told her that he was going to see Lady Ongar that evening. This he communicated to her under an idea that by doing so he made everything right. And I think that the telling of it did relieve his conscience.

He left the office soon after three, having brought himself to believe in the headache, and sauntered down to his club. He found men playing whist there, and, as whist might be good for his head, he joined them. They won his money, and scolded him for playing badly till he was angry, and then he went out for a walk by himself. As he went along Piccadilly, he saw Sophie Gordeloup coming towards him, trotting along, with her dress held well up over her ankles, eager, quick, and, as he said to himself, clearly intent upon some mischief. He endeavoured to avoid her by turning up the Burlington Arcade, but she was too quick for him, and was walking up the arcade by his side before he had been able to make up his mind as to the best mode of ridding himself of such a companion.

"Ah, Mr. Clavering, I am so glad to see you. I was with Julie last night. She was fagged, very much fagged; the journey, you know, and the business. But yet so handsome! And we talked of you. Yes, Mr. Clavering; and I told her how good you had been in coming to me. She said you were always good; yes, she did. When shall you see her?"

Harry Clavering was a bad hand at fibbing, and a bad hand also at leaving a question unanswered. When questioned in this way he did not know what to do but to answer the truth. He would much rather not have said that he was going to Bolton Street that evening, but he could find no alternative. "I believe I shall see her this evening," he said, simply venturing to mitigate the evil of making the communication by rendering it falsely doubtful. There are men who fib with so bad a grace and with so little tact that they might as well not fib at all. They not only never arrive at success, but never even venture to expect it.

"Ah, this evening. Let me see. I don't think I can be there to-night; Madame Berenstoffs receives at the embassy."

"Good afternoon," said Harry, turning into Truefit's, the hair-dresser's shop.

"Ah, very well," said Sophie to herself; "just so. It will be better,

much better. He is simply one lout, and why should he have it all? My God, what fools, what louts, are these Englishmen!" Now having read Sophie's thoughts so far, we will leave her to walk up the remainder of the arcade by herself.

I do not know that Harry's visit to Trucfit's establishment had been in any degree caused by his engagement for the evening. I fancy that he had simply taken to ground at the first hole, as does a hunted fox. But now that he was there he had his head put in order, and thought that he looked the better for the operation. He then went back to his club, and when he sauntered into the card-room one old gentleman looked askance at him, as though inquiring angrily whether he had come there to make fresh misery. "Thank you; no,—I won't play again," said Harry. Then the old gentleman was appeased, and offered him a pinch of snuff. "Have you seen the new book about whist?" said the old gentleman. "It is very useful,—very useful. I'll send you a copy if you will allow me." Then Harry left the room, and went down to dinner.

It was a little past eight when he knocked at Lady Ongar's door. I fear he had calculated that if he were punctual to the moment, she would think that he thought the matter to be important. It was important to him, and he was willing that she should know that it was so. But there are degrees in everything, and therefore he was twenty minutes late. He was not the first man who has weighed the diplomatic advantage of being after his time. But all those ideas went from him at once when she met him almost at the door of the room, and, taking him by the hand, said that she was "so glad to see him,—so very glad. Fancy, Harry, I haven't seen an old friend since I saw you last. You don't know how hard all that seems."

"It is hard," said he; and when he felt the pressure of her hand, and saw the brightness of her eye, and when her dress rustled against him as he followed her to her seat, and he became sensible of the influence of her presence, all his diplomacy vanished, and he was simply desirous of devoting himself to her service. Of course, any such devotion was to be given without detriment to that other devotion which he owed to Florence Burton. But this stipulation, though it was made, was made quickly, and with a confused brain.

"Yes,—it is hard," she said. "Harry, sometimes I think I shall go mad. It is more than I can bear. I could bear it if it hadn't been my own fault,—all my own fault."

There was a suddenness about this which took him quite by surprise. No doubt it had been her own fault. He also had told himself that; though, of course, he would make no such charge to her. "You have not recovered yet," he said, "from what you have suffered lately. Things will look brighter to you after a while."

"Will they? Ah,—I do not know. But come, Harry; come and sit down, and let me get you some tea. There is no harm, I suppose, in having you here,—is there?"

"Harm, Lady Ongar?"

"Yes,—harm, Lady Ongar." As she repeated her own name after him, nearly in his tone, she smiled once again; and then she looked as she used to look in the old days, when she would be merry with him. "It is hard to know what a woman may do, and what she may not. When my husband was ill and dying, I never left his bedside. From the moment of my marrying him till his death, I hardly spoke to a man but in his presence; and when once I did, it was he that had sent him. And for all that people have turned their backs upon me. You and I were old friends, Harry, and something more once,—were we not? But I jilted you, as you were man enough to tell me. How I did respect you when you dared to speak the truth to me. Men don't know women, or they would be harder to them."

"I did not mean to be hard to you."

"If you had taken me by the shoulders and shaken me, and have declared that before God you would not allow such wickedness, I should have obeyed you. I know I should." Harry thought of Florence, and could not bring himself to say that he wished it had been so. "But where would you have been then, Harry? I was wrong and false and a beast to marry that man; but I should not, therefore, have been right to marry you and ruin you. It would have been ruin, you know, and we should simply have been fools."

"The folly was very pleasant," said he.

"Yes, yes; I will not deny that. But then the wisdom and the prudence afterwards! Oh, Harry, that was not pleasant. That was not pleasant! But what was I saying? Oh! about the propriety of your being here. It is so hard to know what is proper. As I have been married, I suppose I may receive whom I please. Is not that the law?"

"You may receive me, I should think. Your sister is my cousin's wife." Harry's matter-of-fact argument did as well as anything else, for it turned her thought at the moment.

"My sister, Harry! If there was nothing to make us friends but our connection through Sir Hugh Clavering, I do not know that I should be particularly anxious to see you. How unmanly he has been, and how cruel."

"Very cruel," said Harry. Then he thought of Archie and Archie's suit. "But he is willing to change all that now. Hermione asked me the other day to persuade you to go to Clavering."

"And have you come here to use your eloquence for that purpose? I will never go to Clavering again, Harry, unless it should be yours and your wife should offer to receive me. Then I'd pack up for the dear, dull, solemn old place though I was on the other side of Europe."

"It will never be mine."

"Probably not, and probably, therefore, I shall never be there again. No; I can forgive an injury, but not an insult,—not an insult such as that. I will not go to Clavering; so, Harry, you may save your eloquence."

Hermione I shall be glad to see whenever she will come to me. If you can persuade her to that, you will persuade her to a charity."

"She goes nowhere, I think, without his—his——"

"Without his permission. Of course she does not. That, I suppose, is all as it should be. And he is such a tyrant that he will give no such permission. He would tell her, I suppose, that her sister was no fit companion for her."

"He could not say that now, as he has asked you there."

"Ah, I don't know that. He would say one thing first and another after, just as it would suit him. He has some object in wishing that I should go there, I suppose." Harry, who knew the object, and who was too faithful to betray Lady Clavering, even though he was altogether hostile to his cousin Archie's suit, felt a little proud of his position, but said nothing in answer to this. "But I shall not go; nor will I see him, or go to his house when he comes up to London. When do they come, Harry?"

"He is in town now."

"What a nice husband, is he not? And when does Hermione come?"

"I do not know; she did not say. Little Hughy is ill, and that may keep her."

"After all, Harry, I may have to pack up and go to Clavering even yet,—that is, if the mistress of the house will have me."

"Never in the way you mean, Lady Ongar. Do not propose to kill all my relations in order that I might have their property. Archie intends to marry, and have a dozen children."

'Archie marry! Who will have him? But such men as he are often in the way by marrying some cookmaid at last. Archie is Hugh's body-slave. Fancy being body-slave to Hugh Clavering! He has two, and poor Hermy is the other; only he prefers not to have Hermy near him, which is lucky for her. Here is some tea. Let us sit down and be comfortable, and talk no more about our horrid relations. I don't know what made me speak of them. I did not mean it."

Harry sat down and took the cup from her hand, as she had bidden the servant to leave the tray upon the table.

"So you saw Count Pateroff," she said.

"Yes, and his sister."

"So she told me. What do you think of them?" To this question Harry made no immediate answer. "You may speak out. Though I lived abroad with such as them for twelve months, I have not forgotten the sweet scent of our English hedgerows, nor the wholesomeness of English household manners. What do you think of them?"

"They are not sweet or wholesome," said he.

"Oh, Harry, you are so honest! Your honesty is beautiful. A spade will ever be a spade with you."

He thought that she was laughing at him, and coloured.

"You pressed me to speak," he said, "and I did but use your own words."

"Yes, but you used them with such straightforward violence! Well, you shall use what words you please, and how you please, because a word of truth is so pleasant after living in a world of lies. I know you will not lie to me, Harry. You never did."

He felt that now was the moment in which he should tell her of his engagement, but he let the moment pass without using it. And, indeed, it would have been hard for him to tell. In telling such a story he would have been cautioning her that it was useless for her to love him,—and this he could not bring himself to do. And he was not sure even now that she had not learned the fact from her sister. "I hope not," he said. In all that he was saying he knew that his words were tame and impotent in comparison with hers, which seemed to him to mean so much. But then his position was so unfortunate! Had it not been for Florence Burton he would have been long since at her feet; for, to give Harry Clavering his due, he could be quick enough at swearing to a passion. He was one of those men to whom love-making comes so readily that it is a pity that they should ever marry. He was ever making love to women, usually meaning no harm. He made love to Cecilia Burton over her children's beds, and that discreet matron liked it. But it was a love-making without danger. It simply signified on his part the pleasure he had in being on good terms with a pretty woman. He would have liked to have made love in the same way to Lady Ongar; but that was impossible, and in all love-making with Lady Ongar there must be danger. There was a pause after the expression of his last hopes, during which he finished his tea, and then looked at his boots.

"You do not ask me what I have been doing at my country-house."

"And what have you been doing there?"

"Hating it."

"That is wrong."

"Everything is wrong that I do; everything must be wrong. That is the nature of the curse upon me."

"You think too much of all that now."

"Ah, Harry, that is so easily said. People do not think of such things if they can help themselves. The place is full of him and his memories; full of him, though I do not as yet know whether he ever put his foot in it. Do you know, I have a plan, a scheme, which would, I think, make me happy for one half-hour. It is to give everything back to the family. Everything! money, house, and name; to call myself Julia Brabazon, and let the world call me what it pleases. Then I would walk out into the streets, and beg some one to give me my bread. Is there one in all the wide world that would give me a crust? Is there one, except yourself, Harry—one, except yourself?"

Poor Florence! I fear it fared badly with her cause at this moment. How was it possible that he should not regret, that he should not look back upon Stratton with something akin to sorrow? Julia had been his first love, and to her he could have been always true. I fear he thought

of this now. I fear that it was a grief to him that he could not place himself close at her side, bid her do as she had planned, and then come to him, and share all his crusts. Had it been open to him to play that part, he would have played it well, and would have gloried in the thoughts of her poverty. The position would have suited him exactly. But Florence was in the way, and he could not do it. How was he to answer Lady Ongar? It was more difficult now than ever to tell her of Florence Burton.

His eyes were full of tears, and she accepted that as his excuse for not answering her. "I suppose they would say that I was a romantic fool. When the price has been taken one cannot cleanse oneself of the stain. With Judas, you know, it was not sufficient that he gave back the money. Life was too heavy for him, and so he went out and hanged himself."

"Julia," he said, getting up from his chair, and going over to where she sat on a sofa, "Julia, it is horrid to hear you speak of yourself in that way. I will not have it. You are not such a one as the Iscariot." And as he spoke to her, he found her hand in his.

"I wish you had my burden, Harry, for one half day, so that you might know its weight."

"I wish I could bear it for you—for life."

"To be always alone, Harry; to have none that come to me and scold me, and love me, and sometimes make me smile! You will scold me at any rate; will you not? It is terrible to have no one near one that will speak to one with the old easiness of familiar affection. And then the pretence of it where it does not, cannot, could not, exist! Oh, that woman, Harry;—that woman who comes here and calls me Julie! And she has got me to promise too that I would call her Sophie! I know that you despise me because she comes here. Yes; I can see it. You said at once that she was not wholesome, with your dear outspoken honesty."

"It was your word."

"And she is not wholesome, whosever word it was. She was there, hanging about him when he was so bad, before the worst came. She read novels to him,—books that I never saw, and played *ecarté* with him for what she called gloves. I believe in my heart she was spying me, and I let her come and go as she would, because I would not seem to be afraid of her. So it grew. And once or twice she was useful to me. A woman, Harry, wants to have a woman near her sometimes,—even though it be such an unwholesome creature as Sophie Gordeloup. You must not think too badly of me on her account."

"I will not;—I will not think badly of you at all."

"He is better, is he not? I know little of him or nothing, but he has a more reputable outside than she has. Indeed I liked him. He had known Lord Ongar well; and though he did not toady him nor was afraid of him, yet he was gentle and considerate. Once to me he said words that I was called on to resent;—but he never repeated them, and I know that he was prompted by him who should have protected me. It is too bad, Harry, is it not? Too bad almost to be believed by such as you."

"It is very bad," said Harry.

"After that he was always courteous ; and when the end came and things were very terrible, he behaved well and kindly. He went in and out quietly, and like an old friend. He paid for everything, and was useful. I know that even this made people talk ;—yes, Harry, even at such a moment as that ! But in spite of the talking I did better with him then than I could have done without him."

"He looks like a man who could be kind if he chooses."

"He is one of those, Harry, who find it easy to be good-natured, and who are soft by nature, as cats are,—not from their heart, but through instinctive propensity to softness. When it suits them, they scratch, even though they have been ever so soft before. Count Patzeroff is a cat. You, Harry, I think are a dog." She perhaps expected that he would promise to her that he would be her dog,—a dog in constancy and affection ; but he was still mindful in part of Florence, and restrained himself.

"I must tell you something further," she said. "And indeed it is this that I particularly want to tell you. I have not seen him, you know, since I parted with him at Florence."

"I did not know," said Harry.

"I thought I had told you. However, so it is. And now, listen :—He came down to Ongar Park the other day while I was there, and sent in his card. When I refused to receive him, he wrote to me pressing his visit. I still declined, and he wrote again. I burned his note, because I did not choose that anything from him should be in my possession. He told some story about papers of Lord Ongar. I have nothing to do with Lord Ongar's papers. Everything of which I knew was sealed up in the count's presence and in mine, and was sent to the lawyers for the executors. I looked at nothing ; not at one word in a single letter. What could he have to say to me of Lord Ongar's papers ? "

"Or he might have written ? "

"At any rate he should not have come there, Harry. I would not see him, nor, if I can help it, will I see him here. I will be open with you, Harry. I think that perhaps it might suit him to make me his wife. Such an arrangement, however, would not suit me. I am not going to be frightened into marrying a man, because he has been falsely called my lover. If I cannot escape the calumny in any other way, I will not escape it in that way."

"Has he said anything ? "

"No ; not a word. I have not seen him since the day after Lord Ongar's funeral. But I have seen his sister."

"And has she proposed such a thing ? "

"No, she has not proposed it. But she talks of it, saying that it would not do. Then, when I tell her that of course it would not do, she shows me all that would make it expedient. She is so sly and so false, that with all my eyes open I cannot quite understand her, or quite know what she is doing. I do not feel sure that she wishes it herself."

"She told me that it would not do."

"She did, did she? If she speaks of it again, tell her that she is right, that it will never do. Had he not come down to Ongar Park, I should not have mentioned this to you. I should not have thought that he had in truth any such scheme in his head. He did not tell you that he had been there?"

"He did not mention it. Indeed, he said very little about you at all."

"No, he would not. He is cautious. He never talks of anybody to anybody. He speaks only of the outward things of the world. Now, Harry, what you must do for me is this." As she was speaking to him she was leaning again upon the table, with her forehead resting upon her hands. Her small widow's cap had become thus thrust back, and was now nearly off her head, so that her rich brown hair was to be seen in its full luxuriance, rich and lovely as it had ever been. Could it be that she felt,—half thought, half felt, without knowing that she thought it,—that while the signs of her widowhood were about her, telling in their too plain language the tale of what she had been, he could not dare to speak to her of his love? She was indeed a widow, but not as are other widows. She had confessed, did hourly confess to herself, the guilt which she had committed in marrying that man; but the very fact of such confessions, of such acknowledgment, absolved her from the necessity of any show of sorrow. When she declared how she had despised and hated her late lord, she threw off mentally all her weeds. Mourning, the appearance even of mourning, became impossible to her, and the cap upon her head was declared openly to be a sacrifice to the world's requirements. It was now pushed back, but I fancy that nothing like a thought on the matter had made itself plain to her mind. "What you must do for me is this," she continued. "You must see Count Pateroff again, and tell him from me,—as my friend,—that I cannot consent to see him. Tell him that if he will think of it, he must know the reason why."

"Of course he will know."

"Tell him what I say, all the same; and tell him that as I have hitherto had cause to be grateful to him for his kindness, so also I hope he will not put an end to that feeling by anything now, that would not be kind. If there be papers of Lord Ongar's, he can take them either to my lawyers, if that be fit, or to those of the family. You can tell him that, can you not?"

"Oh, yes; I can tell him."

"And have you any objection?"

"None for myself. The question is,—would it not come better from some one else?"

"Because you are a young man, you mean? Whom else can I trust, Harry? To whom can I go? Would you have me ask Hugh to do this? Or, perhaps you think Archie Clavering would be a proper messenger. Who else have I got?"

"Would not his sister be better?"

"How should I know that she had told him? She would tell him her own story,—what she herself wished. And whatever story she told, he would not believe it. They know each other better than you and I know them. It must be you, Harry, if you will do it."

"Of course I will do it. I will try and see him to-morrow. Where does he live?"

"How should I know? Perhaps nobody knows; no one, perhaps, of all those with whom he associates constantly. They do not live after our fashion, do they, these foreigners? But you will find him at his club, or hear of him at the house in Mount Street. You will do it; eh, Harry?"

"I will."

"That is my good Harry. But I suppose you would do anything I asked you. Ah, well; it is good to have one friend, if one has no more. Look, Harry! if it is not near eleven o'clock! Did you know that you had been here nearly three hours? And I have given you nothing but a cup of tea!"

"What else do you think I have wanted?"

"At your club you would have had cigars and brandy-and-water, and billiards, and broiled bones, and oysters, and tankards of beer. I know all about it. You have been very patient with me. If you go quick perhaps you will not be too late for the tankards and the oysters."

"I never have any tankards or any oysters."

"Then it is cigars and brandy-and-water. Go quick, and perhaps you may not be too late."

"I will go, but not there. One cannot change one's thoughts so suddenly."

"Go, then; and do not change your thoughts. Go and think of me, and pity me. Pity me for what I have got, but pity me most for what I have lost." Harry did not say another word, but took her hand, and kissed it, and then left her.

Pity her for what she had lost! What had she lost? What did she mean by that? He knew well what she meant by pitying her for what she had got. What had she lost? She had lost him. Did she intend to evoke his pity for that loss? She had lost him. Yes, indeed. Whether or no the loss was one to regret, he would not say to himself; or rather, he, of course, declared that it was not; but such as it was, it had been incurred. He was now the property of Florence Burton, and, whatever happened, he would be true to her.

Perhaps he pitied himself also. If so, it is to be hoped that Florence may never know of such pity. Before he went to bed, when he was praying on his knees, he inserted it in his prayers that the God in whom he believed might make him true in his faith to Florence Burton.

The Re-discovery of Dante's Remains at Ravenna.

BEFORE entering on the more immediate subject of this paper, it may not be uninteresting to relate a few of the circumstances connected with my search for the document that has furnished materials for this article. They illustrate in a very remarkable manner the interest taken in literary and archæological matters in the new capital of Italy.

Having heard in England that a Commission had been appointed by the Italian Government last year to inquire and report upon Dante's tomb at Ravenna, the extraordinary re-discovery of the poet's remains, and their condition ; shortly after my arrival in Florence at the beginning of last winter, I made inquiries respecting the labours of the Commissioners, and especially for their Report, which I incidentally heard had been presented to the Italian Government and ordered to be printed.

Although my inquiries did not at first lead to any information whatever on the subject, I naturally supposed that I had not gone to the proper quarters, though it might be reasonably apprehended that every person in Florence, of even moderate education, would be more or less acquainted with the labours and results of such a commission as this. But when applications to gentlemen holding high official appointments, including the secretary of the municipality of Florence, were equally fruitless, I confess that my astonishment became as great as my disappointment, for not only did I fail in seeing a copy of the Report, but I could gain no intelligence whatever respecting its existence.

As a matter of course, I expected to find the document in Vieussieux's extensive and excellent library ; but it was not there, nor did a copy exist in the vast Magliabecchian, or, as it is now more generally called, National Library.

It would probably weary the reader were I to relate all the incidents connected with my search for this Report. Enough, however, has been said to show that intellectual activity among the Florentines is still at a low ebb, and that though the printing-presses in their city have greatly increased in number, and there doubtless are many signs that life's pulses are beating quickly at this centre of the peninsula, the causes are more allied to politics than to art or literature.*

At length I received apparently authentic information that the object of my search existed in the Department of the Minister of Public Instruction. Acting on this, I procured a letter to the secretary, but this gentleman was at Turin with his chief (a not uncommon answer, by the

* Official statistics state that there are now (1866) 112 printing-presses in Florence.

way, given you at present in Florence, the official links between that city and Turin not being yet wholly severed), and his deputy had gone to breakfast—it was twelve o'clock. A second and third visit were equally unsuccessful: the secretary was still absent, and there was no person attached to his department who could give me any information.

Such was the condition of affairs, when, on the occasion of my fourth visit, the secretary and chief being still at Turin, I made my wants known to the porter who had answered my inquiries, and whose intelligence was evidently of no common order. Apprised of these he proceeded to inform me that he thought there was a gentleman in an office on the upper floor of the *ci-devant* convent,* who might be able to give me precise information. Accordingly, furnished with his name, after having threaded several labyrinthine passages, I discovered his office. He was at his post—received me very courteously, and after some delay—for he was not quite sure where copies of the Reports were to be found—kindly placed one in my hands.

Those who have been engaged in a long hunt for a rare book which has resulted in finding it on perhaps a small book-stall in an obscure alley, will best appreciate the delight that I felt when I became possessed of the document, a translation of the principal portion of which is subjoined. And, if my readers share my opinion respecting its great interest, they will agree with me that it is most extraordinary that its existence should not have been well known in Florence, at least by the educated class among whom my inquiries were made. We might almost be disposed to believe that Byron's lines—

Ungrateful Florence! Dante sleeps afar,
Like Scipio, buried by the upbraiding shore,

are still applicable to the citizens of this poet's native town. For what boots it erecting a colossal monumental statue† of the immortal author of the *Divina Commedia*, if they are entirely ignorant of facts which should stir them deeply.

As my little history may entail criticism, it is right to add, that although the Report bears the date of the 12th June, 1865, it was not printed until the autumn of last year, and, moreover, that it has not passed through a publisher's hands.

Let us now turn to the Report itself. It is preceded by the following preface:—"Referring to the solemn and almost miraculous re-discovery of the remains of Dante on the 27th May, 1865, the Minister of Public Instruction, by command of his Majesty the King of Italy, declares and appoints Commendatore Conte Giovanni Gozzadini, Conte Rasponi, Syndic

* The building now occupied by the Minister of Public Instruction in Florence was formerly one of the largest convents in that city.

† *A propos* of this statue—one of Pazzi's most successful works—I may remark that all through this winter it was surrounded, and almost entirely hidden, by scaffolding, nor did I ever perceive any signs of labour within the hoarding; but we should be slow to criticize our neighbours in their art-matters, seeing that our great metropolitan Nelson monument remains unfinished.

of Ravenna, Commendatore Vanucci, Commendatore Professore Giuliani, Cavaliere Professore Paganucci, Conte Cappelletti, Librarian of the Public Library of Ravenna, to be his Majesty's Commissioners, and further appoints Conte Gozzadini president. These are to act in concert with the municipality of the city of Ravenna, which was a loving mother to the Alighieri family in time of trouble. And they are, moreover, hereby desired to draw up a Report of their labours, preceded by a copy of their official instructions."

"Instructions to the Commissioners appointed to inquire into, and verify the facts relating to the re-discovery of the bones of Dante.

"To collect, as far as possible, all information, whether written or traditional, relating to the sepulchre of Dante, and to the incidents connected with the burial or removal of his remains, between the years 1321 and 1677, inclusive.

"To ascertain whether the bones of Dante were removed in 1677 from the sepulchre in which they were placed by the Frati Minori, and if so, to discover the locality to which they were conveyed.

"To examine the wooden chest in the Braccioforte sepulchral chapel, said to contain the bones of Dante, particularly for the purpose of ascertaining whether the chest bears any marks by which it may be referred to the year 1677, or to any other year.

"To ascertain, as far as possible, whether the human bones in the above chest are such as might have belonged to a man who ceased to live at the age when Dante died, and to examine with great minuteness the cranium, and compare it with the cast taken from the mask of Dante bequeathed by the Marquis Torrigiani to Florence, and preserved in the Royal Uffizi Gallery.

"The Commissioners are, moreover, invited and authorized to make any further investigations within or without the above sepulchral chapel, which may be at all likely to throw further light on the particular subject of this inquiry, due care being at the same time taken that no investigations be made without the full concurrence of the municipality of Ravenna."

Report of the Commission appointed to verify the facts connected with the re-discovery of the bones of Dante.

The Commissioners appointed to examine and verify the facts connected with the re-discovery of the bones of Dante assembled on the morning of the 6th June, 1865, in Ravenna, when they were most courteously received by the honourable municipality of that town, all the members of which testified the most ardent desire to assist their inquiries by every means in their power.

All historians, biographers, commentators, and writers of epitaphs agree in stating that Dante Alighieri died in Ravenna, on the 14th September, 1321, and was honourably interred in *arca lapidea*, near the Church

of the Frati Minori; the epitaph attributed to Giovanni del Virgilio, which has been reproduced with others of a later date, having been placed over his tomb. This sepulchre, erected by Guido Novello da Polenta, appears to have been only provisional, as it was intended to replace it by another in all respects more worthy to contain the remains of the divine poet; but Guido, having been expelled from Ravenna, and dying young, was unable to carry out his noble intentions.* Under these circumstances, in 1483, Bernardo Bembo, at that period prætor in Ravenna for the republic of Venice, ordered Pietro Lombardi to make a marble monument in honour of the poet, the front of which bore a basso-relievo of Dante, with a new epitaph. The ravages of time having greatly injured this monument, it was restored and redecorated in 1692, at the expense of the city of Ravenna, by the instigation of the Florentines Domenico Maria Corsi, cardinal legate of Emilia, and Giovanni Salviati, pro-legate. Lastly, in 1780, the cardinal legate, Luigi Valenti Gonzaga, ordered the small temple which still stands to be erected, in which the sculpture by Pietro Lombardi is preserved.

This simple history of the first tomb of Dante gave rise to a long discussion, with the view of testing its accuracy, and eliciting, if possible, further details. None, however, of any great moment, were brought to light.

How long the poet's remains, which were assuredly deposited with great care in the first tomb prepared for them by Guido Novello, remained in their resting-place, is uncertain. It is probable, however, that a few years subsequent to 1321 they were privately removed, prior to the arrival in Ravenna of Cardinal Bertrando del Poggetto, legate of Pope John XXII., at Bologna, who had come for the avowed purpose of barbarously disinterring, excommunicating, and burning the remains of Dante. These projects were, however, happily frustrated by the Florentines Pino della Tosa and Ostagio da Polenta, who boldly came forward as champions of Dante's fame. When the apprehensions arising from Pope John's designs had subsided, the remains of Dante were probably replaced in the monu-

* This Guido Novello was a person of great consequence in Ravenna, and occupied one of the largest palaces in that city. When Dante was expelled from Florence, he offered the poet an asylum in Ravenna, and became his firm friend, though, unfortunately, this friendship was indirectly the cause of the poet's death; for, having great confidence in Dante's diplomatic abilities, he sent him to negotiate a peace with the Venetians, who were preparing for hostilities against Ravenna. But as Dante was unable to procure an audience at Venice, he returned to Ravenna by land, apprehending that he might be intercepted by the Venetian fleet had he attempted to go back by sea. The mortification of having failed in his attempt to preserve his generous patron from impending danger, and the fatigue of the journey, threw Dante into a fever, which terminated his existence. He died in the palace of his friend, who bitterly mourned his death, and evinced the most tender regard for his memory. He had a cast taken of his face, and caused the body of the poet, surrounded by various poetical designs, to be carried in state, on a bier, through the principal streets of Ravenna, after which it was deposited in a marble sarcophagus prepared by himself.

ment erected for them by Bembo, in which they remained until new apprehensions induced the friars of San Francisco to remove the precious treasures again, which shed lustre on their convent. This removal took place in 1519, at which period the Florentines petitioned Pope Leo X. to exercise his papal authority to cause Dante's remains to be transferred to their city; and as this pope was a Florentine, and a member of the powerful house of the Medici, and Michael Angelo had, moreover, offered to erect a suitable monument, in an honourable locality, to the poet, in Florence, the friars of San Francisco had the more reason to apprehend that the remains of Dante would be abstracted.

Whether the latter were replaced in the sepulchre restored by Cardinal Corsi seems to be questionable, for it appears that fierce quarrels prevailed between the Frati Minori and the Commune of Ravenna respecting jurisdiction over the tomb. The enmity between these bodies was so great, that when the commune wished to restore the sepulchre, they were under the necessity of sending thirty-two policemen to protect the workmen engaged in the task. Thus protected, the sepulchre was finally completed in 1692. It then appears to have been securely closed, encircled by an iron railing, and the key of the door committed to the keeping of the heads of the commune. And in order to assert their jurisdiction over the chapel containing the sepulchre, they caused the following inscription to be placed over the door:—*S. P. Q. R. jure et ære suo tamquam thesaurum suum minivit, instauravit, ornavit.*

But, although the friars were in this instance beaten, they refused to acknowledge the supremacy of the commune of Ravenna, and stoutly maintained that the tomb of Dante was their exclusive property, their establishment having, as they stated, been granted the ground on which it stood in 1261, by the Archbishop Filippo Fontana, with the adjoining houses and gardens. They further appealed to Rome against the commune of Ravenna, alleging that the latter, by restoring the mausoleum, had violated their rights and ecclesiastical privileges. The question became still more involved in 1692, when a prisoner with two accomplices having escaped from prison, fled to the mausoleum, and grasping the iron railing encircling it, claimed right of sanctuary. But having been seized by the police and recommitted to prison, a question of privilege was raised and referred to the Council of Ecclesiastical Immunity in Rome. The latter consulted Archbishop Raimondo Ferretti, who replied on the 9th August, 1694, that Dante having been declared a heretic after his death, the place of his sepulture, though originally sacred, was now undoubtedly polluted, and consequently no longer possessed the privilege of sanctuary. The friars endeavoured to upset this decision by affirming that the chapel no longer contained Dante's bones. But the archbishop would not allow this to be any reason why the place should be entitled to ecclesiastical immunity. Be this as it may, it is evident that the friars were greatly interested in keeping the remains of Dante rigidly concealed, apprehending that they might fall into unsafe and unworthy hands. It

also further appears that in 1780, when Cardinal Valenti Gonzaga erected the superstructure of the small temple of Pietro Lombardi, the tomb was solemnly opened, in order to re-establish the fact whether it contained Dante's remains. The result of the examination is not clear, for, according to the obscure language of a contemporary historian, there was found that which made doubt no longer necessary (*vi si rinvenne ciò che era necessario per non dubitarne*),—words which admit of two interpretations. However, it is to be observed that constant traditions maintained that Dante's bones were no longer in his sepulchre; and this is confirmed by a manuscript note lately found in a book, which there is evidence to prove was written at the close of the last century. This note states that at that period the tomb of Dante was opened, and nothing found within. This, observe the Commissioners, is unwelcome information, and if no steps have since been taken to verify the statement, it was probably because there was an unwillingness to accept as certain so painful a truth.*

Happily, however, we now pass from this region of doubts, and are able to cast clear light on the remainder of our interesting history.

The city of Ravenna, having resolved on celebrating the sixth centenary of Dante's birth, good fortune brought a circumstance to light which created a great sensation, and the more so, as it occurred only a few days before the inauguration of the monument erected to the poet's honour in Florence. With the view of increasing the interest in Dante's tomb, the municipality of Ravenna determined on removing the wall adjoining the chapel of Braccioforte. By its removal the tomb would become isolated, and thus better seen. Accordingly the work of demolition was commenced on the 27th of May last year, and had not proceeded long, when from a recess within a closed door in the wall tumbled a rude wooden chest, which flying open as it came to the ground, disclosed human bones and inscriptions on the inner as well as outer sides of the chest, to the effect that the remains were those of Dante.

The discovery having been communicated to the authorities of Ravenna, a searching examination was made of the chest and its contents, and these having been carefully noted, the chest was confided to the charge of a detachment of the National Guard, with whom it remained until the Royal Commissioners went to Ravenna. Before, however, pro-

* Although the authorities of Ravenna, civil as well as ecclesiastical, had doubtless been long aware that Dante's bones were not in their original resting-place, it is certain that such has not been the opinion of the public generally. Histories and all descriptions of "Guides" make mention of Dante's remains in connection with the poet's original sepulchre; and even Byron, who was a devoted worshipper of Dante, believed that they lay here undisturbed. "Dante," says the author of *Childe Harold*, "was buried (*in sacra Minorum ade*) at Ravenna, in a handsome tomb, where his bones remain." And in *Don Juan* he writes,—

"I pass each day where Dante's bones are laid:

A little cupola, more neat than solemn,

Protects his dust, but reverence here is paid

To the bard's tomb, and not the warrior's column."

ceeding to examine the chest and its contents, the Commissioners resolved on having the ancient sepulchre of Dante opened. This was effected on the morning of the 7th June, in the presence of the Syndic of Ravenna, and all the municipal authorities of that town, and a deputation of those of Florence. The result was that the tomb was only found to contain according to the evidence of the chief surgeon, Cavaliere Giovanni Puglioli, and Doctor Claudio Bertozzi, two phalanges of a hand, and one of a foot, with some fragments of laurel-leaves mingled with organic remains in a state of powder. The bones and the latter substances were carefully collected, and placed by the Syndic of Ravenna in the hands of the president of the Commission, in order that they might be submitted to more detailed examination and chemical analysis, and the sepulchre was then carefully closed.

The very small results arising from the opening of this tomb, which, it is stated, occupied from eight o'clock in the morning until three o'clock in the afternoon, rendered it the more necessary to make a careful examination of the bones discovered on the 27th May in the chest. Accordingly, on the 11th June, in the presence of the same parties who had witnessed the opening of the sepulchre, the chest and bones were submitted to a most careful examination, with the following results:—The chest was of such rude workmanship as to render it evident that it had been made by a person wholly unskilled in the art of carpentry; one of the sides measured 77·5 centimetres, while the opposite side, which should have been of the same length, only measured 74·8 centimetres. The two inscriptions were not cut in the centre of the superficies of the sides of the chest, but were placed in irregular positions. That on the outside is as follows:—

DANTIS OSSA
A ME FRE. ANTONIO SANTI
HIC POSITA
AÑO 1677 DIE 18 OCTOBRIIS.

The other inscription within the chest runs thus:—

DANTIS OSSA
DENUPER (sic) REVISÀ 3^a IUNIJ
1677.

The first inscription is in larger characters than the second, but the letters are not so deeply cut; both inscriptions, however, have evidently been graven by the same hand. The characters of the two inscriptions were also found to be, in almost all respects, similar to those in a book written by the same Fre. Antonio Santi preserved in the archives of the municipality. The identity of the characters is very apparent in the small as well as large letters, but especially in the capital D's, which, in the book as well as in the inscriptions within and without the chest, consist, so to speak, of three portions, being, according to three persons from Bolognà, Bergamo, and Ravenna skilled in writing, the work of the same hand.

Thus we have the strongest evidence that Italy is indebted to this

Frate Santi for the preservation of Dante's remains ; for he it was who, at a time of impending danger, had placed the precious bones in a locality where they would be safe.

The Commissioners were, therefore, very naturally extremely desirous of ascertaining who this Frate Santi was. Their researches, which were long and laborious, showed that his parents were Leonardo and Elisabetta Ingoli ; that he was born on the 3rd August, 1644, in Ravenna ; became a member of the Frati Minori, and that in 1677, when he placed the chest within the wall, he was Chancellor of the Convent of San Francisco. The archives of this establishment contain his official signature as chancellor to capitulary documents between 1672 and 1679. Subsequently Frate Santi was elected guardian or head of his convent.*

The Commissioners draw especial attention to the fact, that between the 19th May and 20th June, 1677, and between the 3rd and 20th October of the same year, there are no official records showing that the chapter of the convent met during those periods, and they deduce from this fact the inference, that the abstraction of Dante's remains from their original sepulchre and placing them in their new resting-place, was a secret known only to Santi and a few other persons ; the more likely to be kept, as no meetings of the chapter were held at the time when the poet's remains were removed.

We now come to one of the most interesting parts of the Report : the examination of the bones found in the chest. This appears to have been made with great care and skill, the Commissioners having had the assistance of the highest anatomical authorities.

The bones, they state, are those of a robust adult male, rather advanced in manhood. Exteriorly, they are rather black, presenting the appearance that bones generally have when long enclosed in metallic, marble, or wooden receptacles. Their texture has not undergone any remarkable alteration, and what is even more surprising is the fact, that with the exception of the round-headed articulations at the extremity of certain long bones, and in some localities of the cranium, no important change from time or damp is apparent.

It was found that the bones, compared with a perfect human skeleton, wanted precisely those portions which were found in the original sepulchre ; and it was further noticed that the hue of the surface of those phalanges was similar to that of the bones found in Frate Santi's wooden chest. The length of the skeleton was one metre and fifty-five centimetres. If to this length be added that of the soft parts, such as the cartilages, &c. of the human subject when living, it follows that the bones were those of a man of middle stature. The weight of the bones, without the head, was four kilogrammes and 150 grammes ; the cranium weighed 780 grammes.

* Further details of the life of Frate Santi will be found in a work entitled *Uomini illustri di Ravenna antica*. Bologna, 1708.

Examination of the skeleton of the trunk and of the four extremities showed that the clavicles were considerably curved—due to the resistance of the humeri and scapulars—as were also the bones of the thigh, legs, and feet. The sacrum was found joined to the first portion of the coccyx. The femurs were forty-four centimetres and five millimetres long.

As might be expected, the portion of these osseous remains which engaged the greatest attention, and were subject to the most detailed examination, was the cranium, which in all human skeletons must be considered the most noble portion, as being the seat of the brain, always regarded by anatomists as closely connected with the thinking organs of man. In order to ascertain the probable weight of this organ, the cavity which enclosed the brain was filled with grains of rice, which weighed one kilogramme and 420 grammes, equal to 3·1319 lbs. avoirdupois. Very accurate measurements were made of various parts of the cranium, the principal only of which are subjoined. The diameter from the occiput to the frontal bone was thirty-one centimetres and seven millimetres; the transverse diameter, taken between the ears, thirty-one centimetres and eight millimetres, and the vertical diameter, fourteen centimetres.

The periphery of the cranium, measured along two lines starting respectively from points on each side of the most projecting part of the occipital protuberance, and terminating at the nasal prominence, was fifty-two centimetres and five millimetres.

Particular attention is drawn in the Report to the circumstance that the upper jaw had been furnished with only two incisors (the central incisors) instead of four, and that the right last molar tooth had not been naturally developed.

Various prominences were extremely conspicuous on Dante's skull; one in particular was remarkable for its great size. It was situated near the middle and upper part of the frontal bone, and was of longitudinal form. Though not acknowledging themselves to be disciples of Gall or Spurzheim, the Commissioners draw particular attention to these prominences, and state that, according to the laws of phrenology, Dante largely possessed the organs of benevolence, religion, veneration, independence, self-esteem, pride, conscientiousness, mechanical design, sculpture, and architecture.

Finally, the Commissioners declare with justifiable pride, that Dante's skull denotes the highest order of brain power, being precisely similar in conformation to the skulls of those individuals who have held supreme dominion over the minds of men, and have been the true masters of mankind.

In order to enable the public to see the honoured remains of Dante, the Commissioners and authorities of Ravenna directed that they should lie in state, efficiently protected by glass.

Accordingly, on the 25th June, which was Sunday, they were exposed to public view in the Braccioforte Chapel, and it was the opinion of all those who had the high privilege of gazing on the head of the author of

the *Divina Commedia*, that it possessed all the physical features of the highest intellectual organization. And as it cannot be our privilege to look on this relic of surpassing interest, it will be satisfactory to our readers, and especially to those who have been in Florence, or who purpose visiting that fair city, to be informed that the mask of the illustrious poet preserved in the Uffizi Gallery, to which allusion has been made, has been found on most careful comparison to be in all respects similar in configuration to the cranium discovered in the wooden chest at Ravenna. The length of the nasal bones agreed precisely, and the same remark applies to all other parts which admitted of measurement.

Thus, although, as the Commissioners observe, some circumstances in connexion with Dante's original sepulchre have yet to be made clear, especially as regards its early history, there is no doubt whatever that the human remains they examined were the genuine and sacred bones of Dante.

I trust that the reader ere this has come to the conclusion that the Report from whence the foregoing particulars have been drawn, is one of rare and surpassing interest. The discovery of any portion of Dante's remains at a time when Italy was about to honour his memory by commemorating the sixth centenary of his birth with great pomp and solemnity, may be indeed regarded, in the words of the Commissioners, as almost miraculous; but when we find that among those remains is the head of Italy's immortal poet, the discovery may well be considered as one of the most interesting that has ever been made.

For that head belonged to a man who, six centuries ago, when Italy was torn by political factions, each ambitious for power, and all entirely unscrupulous as to the means employed to obtain it, laboured with untiring zeal to bring about Italian unity; yet, whose patriotism met no other reward than exile, how bitterly felt appears from those heart-rending lines in the *Paradiso*:—

Si come sa di sale
Lo pane altrui, e com' è duro calle
Lo scendere e'l salir per l'altrui scale.

But even more interesting is the knowledge that this head, so wonderfully preserved, was that of one of the most divinely-inspired poets that the world has seen.



A German Life before the Peace of 1815.

WHEN we look at our neighbours in Germany and see the quiet way in which they live, how they cling to and keep up their family ties, how openly they practise all the little kindnesses of life which we think proper to keep out of sight, how they unite the demonstrative affection of Mary with the care for the household of Martha, we might almost suppose they have trudged on in this primitive fashion since the middle ages. And we might fairly think that the protracted existence of these old-world ways could only be accounted for by a long undisturbed condition of society; we might presume that people must have gone on making cakes with big round holes in the middle of them since gabled houses were new ;—(those odd-shaped cakes have been left with a North German name to them even when the Dutch set foot in the East Indies)—that they had drank quantities of weak coffee at all hours of the day since first coffee found its way from Mocha by Trieste to Cologne ; that they had given each other birthday presents all round, like only good little children do in England, since Protestants began to keep birthdays instead of Saints' days ; and dressed Christmas-trees once a year, since—does any one know how long ?

But if we look into any history of Europe, the driest school epitome, even, which only gives facts and no philosophy of history to distract one, we shall see how far from a quiet country has been this Germany, which, without what are called natural boundaries, has isolated by race and language the whole centre of Europe, from the North Sea at Hamburg to the Mediterranean at Trieste, and from Alsace to Poland. Wars and fightings were throughout the land when the Rhine castles were built : they fell to ruin, and corn and the vineyards of the south spread over the country till armies came into it again. "The first battle of Leipzig was in 1631," says the lesson-book. "The Palatinate," the land we now know as the Grand Duchy of Baden, "was ravaged by Tilly." There was the "Thirty Years' War," and the "Seven Years' War," and just about a hundred years ago, the great Frederick, after the peace of 1763, counted up the towns destroyed and the men killed, and set himself as bravely to face and redress public and private wrongs as he had ever faced any enemy. We read of it all as history, but let us try and divest ourselves of this telescopic habit of looking, and come close and see what happened in countries where armies, and those foreign armies, "marched and counter-marched," or "halted" awhile to rest. Soldiers do not always "march" even so regularly as when we now and then see them coming home from a review, hot and kicking up a dust, and twitching off a few flowers' heads as they go by a garden. Any one who has lived in a garrison town will recollect changes of regiments as involving a few days of not very serious

but not very pleasant disorder ; it is within our recollection that soldiers on the move in England would come into a yard and lead off a waggon and team for the day's march, and it was lawful so to do ; but they were in their own country, where they spoke the language, at least, of the people they disturbed : if they were ever so "jolly" and riotous, all reasonable people would allow for some irregularity when men rest from a long march. We remember a testy commodore replying to a clergyman who remonstrated with him on the behaviour of sailors allowed leave ashore when the ship came into harbour. "I'd like to know, sir, if you'd expect two hundred and forty parsons to keep order if they came into port after a cruise." But if soldiers and sailors (and "even parsons") are likely not to keep up the strictest discipline when they are on the move in their own country, what is likely to happen in a foreign neutral if ~~not~~ hostile place, when regiment after regiment, cannon after cannon, come through ; regiments that struggle through hedges and over fields, cannon whose drivers no more respect gardens than Peter the Great did Mr. Evelyn's yews ; over the young corn in the spring, among the tempting apple-orchards in the summer, through, straight through, the tangled vineyards in the autumn. Villagers frightened leave their houses to the strangers ; the rich think wiser to open their gates and dispense unwillingly hospitality to guests who receive and repay it in kind, and the work and the pleasure of years is annihilated "all for a famous victory." All this, and over and over again, Germany has suffered within a hundred years of this time. From this it has recovered to be the prosperous land we see ; through all this it has preserved its curiously-simple habits, and now all is over and the old ways become dearer than ever, national character and national customs rise up north and south and east and west, like strong shoots from the outstretching roots of an old tree that has been lopped in time.

The life of a German family during this period between the end of the last century and the peace of 1815 is worth looking into, and in a memoir of Caroline Perthes, by the late Professor Monnard, there is a sketch of the quiet household of her father (the comparatively little remembered Wandsheeker Bote) and of the trouble and strife into which she was plunged as the wife of the Hamburg bookseller, a sketch that if we follow for twenty years will take us into scenes that it may be for our good to remember were enacting on the Continent while we in our island home could dread but never see "Bonaparte and the French." The Claudius family, of whom Caroline, afterwards wife of Frederick Perthes, was the eldest daughter, lived at Wandsheek, a few miles north-east of Hamburg, but in Holstein. The household must have been an attractive one. Claudius was gifted with a rich fund of humour, which made him an unusually-entertaining companion ; but besides this, he had a profound faith in God and his mercy, and was deeply penetrated with religious principles, and that at a time when faiths and religions were dislodged from their hold on thinking men, when in France it was not safe, in Germany not common, to confess a belief in anything that had been a dogma of a church. In 1796 lived at quiet

Wandseeck the families of Claudius and Jacobi. Jacobi had convinced himself of the soundness of the prevailing opinions, but this did not exclude him from the circle of intimates in which were the Stollbergs and Reventlows, and Caroline, Claudius's bosom friend, was that Princess Gallitzin who retired from the world under the counsels of Diderot, devoted herself to the education of her children, begged her friends not to try and convert her to anything, and read and reasoned herself back into the church she had been born in.

It was at the house of Jacobi was prepared that year the Christmas-tree, that old Lutheran observance, which perhaps dates as far back as do the horses' heads over North German farmhouse doors, which has spread itself by degrees into Western Germany, has become Catholic as well as Protestant, and in a much-changed form has located itself recently in England. A German artist lately painted a group of his countrymen unveiling one in the wilds of Minnesota to an astonished group of North American Indians. But the Weinachtsabend and its Christthum of German life are quite different affairs from our English merry Christmas. Here it is essentially a serious though not mournful time, and the "tree" is purely a family or friendly festival; beyond the household none are present, save such few intimates as from one cause or other have no celebration at home. The tree is hidden by doors or curtains from the room where all assemble, children watch in eager expectation the increasing light behind, the elders (if their weakness lies that way), with occasional misgivings of fire, as tiny candles flash from corner to corner. The pause is broken by little voices singing a hymn, the father leading verse by verse, and then the tree is exposed, and in a moment the room is lit up

With a quintessence of flame,
From thousand tapers flaring bright.

The tree, the happy little fir-tree of Hans Andersen's tale, is decked with candles and baubles and bonbons and tinsel, quaintly-devised gingerbread, wonderful garlands of quince sausages, some superlatively bright ornament being fixed to the topmost shoot; but after all, except for the light it gives, the tree is for the time a secondary consideration. The room it now illuminates is encumbered with presents that have been preparing half the previous year; presents for old and young, for high and low, from mother to father, from father to mother, and even to the stranger that is within the gates. The mother leads the children and servants to the chair or table appropriated to each one's possessions, and there is a confused murmur of "Du liebste Mamma," "die gnädige Frau," with the long drawn-out "wun-der-schön" that German children so delight in. It was into such a gathering as this that Perthes was invited by Jacobi, and went from his books and his philosophical talks with his customers, and he made his silent declaration to his future wife by detaching the gayest painted fruit from the top of the tree, and presenting it to her before all the world.

Her life had been wonderfully placid until she married. Though more than usually cultivated, she and her sisters helped as German ladies did and

do in the housework, believing that a rightly-educated person may be as good or better a pastrycook than a mere drudge, and lose no refinement by skimming preserves. So the young ladies made the cakes in the morning for the guests to eat, while they played the fugues of Bach or the symphonies of Mozart in the evening. But when Caroline Perthes went to Hamburg she came for the first time into direct contact with the world. Her children were born in the first years of this century. In 1801 the Battle of the Baltic was fought. It is said the boom of those guns was heard over the shallow seas and along the sands of Schleswig, further than any sound has been recorded to have been heard; but if it did not reach Hamburg there were rumours enough of war and tumult. "For the battle rages loud and strong, and the stormy tempests blow." Still for the present it was not much nearer to the Hamburg homes than it ever came to our English ones. It had to come closer before it did more than excite horror and pity.

In 1810, Perthes took his family to visit Schwarzburg, his native place. His uncles and their children came up the last hill to meet him, and packing all the little cousins together into the capacious travelling coach, they embraced each other and walked on talking over old times, "till," says the first letter home to Wandsbeck, "they felt twenty years younger for being together again." A few weeks after, Caroline Perthes wrote from Gotha: "While we were in the Thuringian forests we had almost forgotten the French, but here we are reminded of them every day. For months past, splendid cannon from Dantzic and Magdeburg have been dragged through the town on their way to Paris." And to quote M. Monnard, "she was doomed to be both a witness and a victim of the wretchedness arising from a social condition where right made might, and where the sword was the ruling power. A few days before the Christmas of 1810, by a decree of the French Senate published at Hamburg, the Hanse Towns and the North-East of Germany were incorporated into the French Empire."

The first occupation of Hamburg by the French under Davoust (of whom St. Beuve says, "J'ai ouï dire qu'il n'était pas tendre,") lasted till March, 1813. It was a reign of arbitrary power, when spoliation and extortion were permitted and justice was defied; but it was a period of less suffering than that which followed. Patriotic citizens enrolled themselves into a guard for their own protection, and of course the authorities, or rather those who were in power, suspected their intentions. Perthes and others drilled in secret in their own houses, and his name was first on the list of those to be arrested: houses were searched, the sick and even the insane disturbed in their beds, and the family never lay down to rest without providing means for his escape, and planning, with the help of a relative who was his clerk, how to gain time by delay if the dreaded visit should take place during the night. "In 1813 Moscow was burnt;" French soldiers were needed elsewhere, and till a more stringent conscription had filled the thinned ranks, Hamburg was evacuated. The Hanse Towns formed themselves into a league for their common defence. In such emergencies, as in the earliest periods of society, physical strength

must accompany mental energy, and in this respect unfortunately Von Hless, their commander, was wanting. His health was feeble. It needed the utmost exertions of those who served under him to make up for the deficiency. Foremost among these was Perthes, and whatever were their difficulties, the defence, when Davoust and Vandamme bombarded the town, was so brilliant, that Davoust, infuriated, declared "if he could get into Hamburg for two hours, he would not leave one stone on another, and would strip the inhabitants of everything but their eyes to weep over their misery." Misery it was indeed. St. Just said, "*Ceux qui font les révolutions dans le monde, ceux qui veulent faire le bien, ne doivent dormir que dans le tombeau.*" It was for a higher cause than to effect a revolution that Perthes devoted himself. "For twenty-one nights," writes his wife, "he has not been to bed or changed his clothes. All day I was in fear for his safety, and he could only come in now and then for half-an-hour at a time. Not a man was left in the house, all were under arms, but people were continually coming and going, asking for anything to eat or to drink, for no one that we knew had yet begun to keep house again in the town. In the large room, I had a number of mattresses spread, where many of our weary townsmen might lie down. One of our friends, and many whom we knew, were killed on the ramparts. But the French were daily reinforced, and no town can hold out long unassisted." "Day and night I passed on the balcony," she writes again, "watching to see if my husband or any of my family or friends were among the wounded who were carried to the hospital." At last—and it was only at the very last—the family of Perthes escaped to Wandsheck, which was on Danish ground. This was on the night of the 28th of May: on the 30th the Russians retired, and Hamburg was again at the mercy of the French. In the night Perthes joined his wife and children for a moment, Wandsheck was too near to be safe for one who had been so prominent among the defenders of the city, or even to be sufficiently secure for his family. They must push on to Nutschau, and put themselves under the protection of Count Moltke, and he must go further off still. There was no time to hesitate, or even to prepare; they set out in a country cart, and reached the place before morning. "There were ten of us, and two beds, so I spread cloaks on bundles of linen for the children to lie on;" but even there they could not stay, so active was the search for Perthes, and they went on into what has lately been the scene of the war between Prussia and Denmark, to Eckernförde, where Count Caius Reventlow could give them a little deserted cottage by the sea-side. Perthes had succeeded in carrying off from Hamburg his account-books, and he sat down to examine them resolutely, to see what were his prospects and what were his means. Everything was lost: the house of business and all his property were sequestered; his dwelling-house was stripped of its contents and inhabited by a French general; he had no ready money. Comfort there was none; consolation he might take from the expressions of esteem and confidence he received from one and all of his creditors, and from many eminent men, his friends. How

the fearful ordeal had stirred the depths of the German woman's soul, may be seen in her proud rejoicing that her husband was excluded from the general amnesty that the French proclaimed on re-entering Hamburg. "I am thankful from the bottom of my heart," she writes to her husband, who had taken refuge in Mecklenburg, "that your name is found among those of the enemies of the ruling power. It will be our pride and our happiness as long as we live." Their life at Eckernförde required the consolation of these generous feelings.

"The house consisted of a room and some lofts. Except the farmer who lived hard by, there was not a soul for miles round, and with all his good will, he had literally not the means of giving us more than milk and butter. Bread, salt, soap, and oil, and such things had to be fetched from three miles off, and this was the task of my sister and the two eldest children. For eighteen weeks we saw neither meat nor white bread; the so-called kitchen was outside the house; it was supplied with four copper saucepans and a tin one, a few plates, and that was all. I had saved some spoons; we bought knives and forks; but we were rich in comparison with many of our friends, for at all events we had a hundred times more than nothing." The one room alluded to had in it twelve windows opening down to the ground, and these in a house by the sea-side during a wet summer were anything but wholesome, causing constant illness both to the children and their mother; while, though there was a good-natured horse-doctor at Eckernförde, there was no better advice nearer than Kiel. The Reventlows and Hallbergs were constant in their kindness, but it was a fearful time. Letters from Perthes reached her irregularly, while rumours, exaggerated and confused, of his danger came through others. He dared not expose her to the risk of coming to him—he could not go to her. But the political horizon was clearing, figures came out plainer, too, in the foreground, if the middle distance remained indistinct. On the Christmas evening of 1813 he suddenly appeared in the family circle, but only for a very few days, for on him had devolved the duty of distributing the sums of money sent from all parts to relieve the distress of those who had been driven out of Hamburg. The consequences of war were becoming more keenly felt as its excitement was lessening; posts were irregular and interrupted—he was but a few miles from Hamburg, and could get no news of his wife who was at Kiel. He became alarmed, and succeeded in reaching her. "You are all well?" was his first question—but one little one was lying dead, and the letters to warn him of its illness and tell him of its death were lost. A summons from the Russian head-quarters to a conference about the fugitives from Hamburg interrupted his passionate grief. "In times like these, and for such a purpose, you must obey the call," said his brave wife;—and again he was plunged into the midst of all the misery, poverty, and fever caused by the occupation of the country by foreign troops. An accident followed by an attack of the fever brought him to the verge of the grave, and before he recovered the French were gone. From Blankenese, where he lay recovering, he saw the white flags fly out from the towers and steeples of

the city, but he saw, too, the returning exiles land from the boats at the mouth of the Elbe : groups of worn parents dragging along many children who gathered twigs off the first bushes they came to as if taking possession of their country again ; carriage-loads of little children, whose parents had died in the hospitals at Bremen ; exiles returning from Hanover, " many people and no baggage,"—but they were going back to their homes.

On the 31st of May, 1814, Perthes entered Hamburg with the troops. What a year had passed since he had escaped with his family in May of the previous year !—" a weary and tumultuous space." But he had finished his duty as a soldier, and now he resolved to resume his business, and his place among men of letters. " I can rejoice, I can forgive, I can forget all but my lost child," wrote his wife, " but there are hard times still before us." Before the quiet life could be resumed, before they could " live a year as they were wont to live," there was much to be gone through of mental anxiety, and much of bodily toil. The house was standing, and that was about all that could be said for it ; there was not a corner in it fit to sit down in, the floors were a foot deep in filth, the lower story had been used as a guard-room. A stove being in the middle of the large hall, and the soldiers disinclined to take the trouble of constantly feeding it, had hit on the expedient of pushing trunks of trees through the windows, so that one end reached the fire, and as it was consumed they could shove it further and further in ! We have heard of an indolent Asiatic doing this to save the trouble of chopping wood, but it was new to us as a European practice. Every bit of wood-work had been torn down, every morsel of furniture was gone, and if the want of money precluded any but the most necessary expenditure, the aspect of the greater poverty pressing on all around reduced even this to the lowest possible limit. Still, by the next year they were able to receive Claudius into their house, and to surround his bed with comfort when the old man lay down in his daughter's home to die. It was then he said, " Since my youth I have speculated on these last hours, and I no more understand them now than I did when I was in the fulness of health."

Life in Hamburg ceased to be eventful ; " happy " indeed they could feel was " the nation without a history." The family resumed its quiet round of daily life, though Perthes had often to take what were then long journeys on matters of business—making acquaintance with all the great men who in various parts of Germany had been working for the cause of national freedom. His memoirs, as written by his son, are full of interest, and we cannot but join in his ejaculation, " May God send us many more such men as Frederick Perthes ! " To those in England, who believe as many do, that " all Germans are Rationalists," we cannot do better than show them for their enlightenment the conversations of Perthes with Hoffhauer, Protestant and Catholic as they were, or his letters to his wife, and her rejoinders as he was passing from Protestant to Catholic states. For those who think it beneath an intellectual woman's dignity to love her husband and children devotedly, and make no secret of it, there are letters overflowing with tenderness. For those who think

a strong-minded woman must not compromise her consistency by attending to trifles, there is to be seen in Caroline Perthes a woman who trembled only with heart-sickness at the sound of the bombardment of the town she was living in, who could enter earnestly into her husband's political aspirations, and still could write to her married daughter, "Learn, my dear housewife, to find pleasure in your daily life; great events are rare." And she could write with glee of the packing the box of Christmas presents for and from one and all, and recall the Christmas-tree of a quarter of a century before.

The household we have followed from peace to war, and back again to peace, is one of the many thousands that suffered as much, without historians to tell the tale; and now, while we write this, the thought is strong within us that all this may be again, not at some distant and strange time, but instant, almost within the hour. And this time the hosts that will devastate, the cannon that will destroy, the commanders that will direct the ruin, and the women who will weep in victory and in defeat, will all be German. We cannot contemplate this event with the entire self-satisfaction of those public writers who see no solution for the problem but in a paroxysm of national madness, and are continually thankful that they are not even as the Germans. The catastrophe to us is too solemn, and our conviction that the best Germans contemplate their own position with eyes at least as clear as ours, too sincere, for us to rest on this hypothesis. It may be that the very virtues to which we have drawn attention in these pages are not without their share in bringing about this political complication. The "plain living and high thinking" which Wordsworth mourned over as "no more" in England, and which expresses as well as words can do the ideal of German domestic life, may have had the disadvantage of leaving the active direction of great affairs too much in the hands of unscrupulous men, who know how to take advantage of the instincts and aspirations of the people and to use them for selfish and dynastic objects. The intensity of the feeling against the Prussian Minister and his policy on the part of the leading members of the Opposition is no growth of ordinary political difference or social animosity, but it comes from the settled belief that he is provoking civil war without any overpowering necessity of principle or duty. The ultimate objects to which both he and the Prussian nation look may be the same, but the novel lens through which they are seen by him is totally distinct from theirs, and therefore they thoroughly disapprove of his means of attaining them. Such characters as are portrayed in the volume to which we have drawn attention, and which still grace the towns of Northern Germany, though intensely national, and ready for any patriotic sacrifice, have nothing in common with the aggressive, almost filibustering spirit, which pervades certain classes, and which threatens confusion to Europe, and disaster not only to their domestic life and national interests, but, it may be, to the integrity of their nation.



ONE TOO MANY.

Armada.

BOOK THE LAST.

CHAPTER III.

THE PURPLE FLASK.



THE cab was waiting at the gates as Miss Gwilt approached the Sanatorium. Mr. Bashwood got out and advanced to meet her. She took his arm and led him aside a few steps, out of the cabman's hearing.

"Think what you like of me," she said, keeping her thick black veil down over her face—"but don't speak to me to-night. Drive back to your hotel as if nothing had happened. Meet the tidal train to-morrow as usual; and come to me afterwards at the Sanatorium. Go without a word, and I shall believe there is one man in the world who really loves me. Stay and ask questions, and

I shall bid you good-by at once and for ever!"

She pointed to the cab. In a minute more it had left the Sanatorium and was taking Mr. Bashwood back to his hotel.

She opened the iron gate and walked slowly up to the house door shudder ran through her as she rang the bell. She laughed bitterly. "Shivering again!" she said to herself. "Who would have thought I had so much feeling left in me?"

For once in his life the doctor's face told the truth, when the study door opened between ten and eleven at night, and Miss Gwilt entered the room.

"Mercy on me!" he exclaimed, with a look of the blindest bewilderment, "what does this mean?"

"It means," she answered, "that I have decided to-night instead of deciding to-morrow. You, who know women so well, ought to know that

they act on impulse. I am here on an impulse. Take me or leave me, just as you like."

"Take you or leave you?" repeated the doctor, recovering his presence of mind. "My dear lady, what a dreadful way of putting it! Your room shall be got ready instantly! Where is your luggage? Will you let me send for it? No? You can do without your luggage to-night? What admirable fortitude! You will fetch it yourself to-morrow? What extraordinary independence! Do take off your bonnet. Do draw in to the fire! What can I offer you?"

"Offer me the strongest sleeping-draught you ever made in your life," she replied. "And leave me alone till the time comes to take it. I shall be your patient in earnest!" she added fiercely as the doctor attempted to remonstrate. "I shall be the maddest of the mad, if you irritate me to-night!"

The Principal of the Sanatorium became gravely and briefly professional in an instant.

"Sit down in that dark corner," he said. "Not a soul shall disturb you. In half an hour you will find your room ready, and your sleeping-draught on the table. It's been a harder struggle for her than I anticipated," he thought, as he left the room, and crossed to his Dispensary on the opposite side of the hall. "Good heavens, what business has *she* with a conscience, after such a life as hers has been!"

The Dispensary was elaborately fitted up with all the latest improvements in medical furniture. But one of the four walls of the room was unoccupied by shelves, and here the vacant space was filled by a handsome antique cabinet of carved wood, curiously out of harmony, as an object, with the unornamented utilitarian aspect of the place generally. On either side of the cabinet two speaking-tubes were inserted in the wall, communicating with the upper regions of the house, and labelled respectively, "Resident Dispenser," and "Head Nurse." Into the second of these tubes the doctor spoke, on entering the room. An elderly woman appeared, took her orders for preparing Mrs. Armadale's bed-chamber, curtsayed, and retired.

Left alone again in the Dispensary, the doctor unlocked the centre compartment of the cabinet, and disclosed a collection of bottles inside, containing the various poisons used in medicine. After taking out the laudanum wanted for the sleeping-draught, and placing it on the dispensary-table, he went back to the cabinet—looked into it for a little while—shook his head doubtfully—and crossed to the open shelves on the opposite side of the room. Here, after more consideration, he took down one out of the row of large chemical bottles before him, filled with a yellow liquid: placing the bottle on the table, he returned to the cabinet, and opened a side compartment, containing some specimens of Bohemian glass-work. After measuring it with his eye, he took from the specimens a handsome purple flask, high and narrow in form, and closed by a glass stopper. This he filled with the yellow liquid, leaving a small quantity

only at the bottom of the bottle, and locking up the flask again in the place from which he had taken it. The bottle was next restored to its place, after having been filled up with water from the cistern in the Dispensary, mixed with certain chemical liquids in small quantities, which restored it (so far as appearances went) to the condition in which it had been when it was first removed from the shelf. Having completed these mysterious proceedings, the doctor laughed softly, and went back to his speaking-tubes to summon the Resident Dispenser next.

The Resident Dispenser made his appearance shrouded in the necessary white apron from his waist to his feet. The doctor solemnly wrote a prescription for a composing draught, and handed it to his assistant.

"Wanted immediately, Benjamin," he said, in a soft and melancholy voice. "A lady-patient—Mrs. Armadale, Room Number-one, Second-floor. Ah, dear, dear!" groaned the doctor absently; "an anxious case, Benjamin—an anxious case." He opened the bran-new ledger of the establishment, and entered the Case at full length, with a brief abstract of the prescription. "Have you done with the laudanum? Put it back, and lock the cabinet, and give me the key. Is the draught ready? Label it 'to be taken at bed-time,' and give it to the nurse, Benjamin—give it to the nurse."

While the doctor's lips were issuing these directions, the doctor's hands were occupied in opening a drawer under the desk on which the ledger was placed. He took out some gaily-printed cards of admission "to view the Sanatorium, between the hours of two and four, P.M.," and filled them up with the date of the next day, "December tenth." When a dozen of the cards had been wrapped up in a dozen lithographed letters of invitation, and enclosed in a dozen envelopes, he next consulted a list of the families resident in the neighbourhood, and directed the envelopes from the list. Ringing a bell this time, instead of speaking through a tube, he summoned the man-servant, and gave him the letters, to be delivered by hand the first thing the next morning. "I think it will do," said the doctor, taking a turn in the Dispensary when the servant had gone out; "I think it will do." While he was still absorbed in his own reflections, the nurse re-appeared to announce that the lady's room was ready; and the doctor thereupon formally returned to the study to communicate the information to Miss Gwilt.

She had not moved since he left her. She rose from her dark corner when he made his announcement, and, without speaking or raising her veil, glided out of the room like a ghost.

After a brief interval, the nurse came downstairs again, with a word for her master's private ear.

"The lady has ordered me to call her to-morrow at seven o'clock, sir," she said. "She means to fetch her luggage herself, and she wants to have a cab at the door as soon as she is dressed. What am I to do?"

"Do what the lady tells you," said the doctor. "She may be safely trusted to return to the Sanatorium."

The breakfast hour at the Sanatorium was half-past eight o'clock. By that time Miss Gwilt had settled everything at her lodging, and had returned with her luggage in her own possession. The doctor was quite amazed at the promptitude of his patient.

"Why waste so much energy?" he asked, when they met at the breakfast-table. "Why be in such a hurry, my dear lady, when you had all the morning before you?"

"Mere restlessness!" she said, briefly. "The longer I live, the more impatient I get."

The doctor, who had noticed before she spoke that her face looked strangely pale and old that morning, observed when she answered him that her expression—naturally mobile in no ordinary degree—remained quite unaltered by the effort of speaking. There was none of the usual animation on her lips, none of the usual temper in her eyes. He had never seen her so impenetrably and coldly composed as he saw her now. "She has made up her mind at last," he thought. "I may say to her this morning, what I couldn't say to her last night."

He prefaced the coming remarks by a warning look at her widow's dress.

"Now you have got your luggage," he began gravely, "permit me to suggest putting that cap away, and wearing another gown."

"Why?"

"Do you remember what you told me, a day or two since?" asked the doctor. "You said there was a chance of Mr. Armadale's dying in my Sanatorium?"

"I will say it again, if you like."

"A more unlikely chance," pursued the doctor, deaf as ever to all awkward interruptions, "it is hardly possible to imagine! But as long as it is a chance at all, it is worth considering. Say then that he dies,—dies suddenly and unexpectedly, and makes a Coroner's Inquest necessary in the house. What is our course in that case? Our course is to preserve the characters to which we have committed ourselves—you as his widow, and I as the witness of your marriage—and, in those characters, to court the fullest inquiry. In the entirely improbable event of his dying just when we want him to die, my idea—I might even say, my resolution—is, to admit that we knew of his resurrection from the sea; and to acknowledge that we instructed Mr. Bushwood to entrap him into this house, by means of a false statement about Miss Milroy. When the inevitable questions follow, I propose to assert that he exhibited symptoms of mental alienation shortly after your marriage—that his delusion consisted in denying that you were his wife, and in declaring that he was engaged to be married to Miss Milroy—that you were in such terror of him on this account, when you heard he was alive and coming back, as to be in a state of nervous agitation that required my care—that at your request, and to calm that nervous agitation, I saw him professionally, and got him quietly into the house by a humouring of his delusion perfectly justifiable in such a case—

and lastly, that I can certify his brain to have been affected by one of those mysterious disorders, eminently incurable, eminently fatal, in relation to which medical science is still in the dark. Such a course as this (in the remotely possible event which we are now supposing) would be, in your interests and mine, unquestionably the right course to take—and such a dress as *that* is, just as certainly, under existing circumstances, the wrong dress to wear.”

“Shall I take it off at once?” she asked, rising from the breakfast-table, without a word of remark on what had just been said to her.

“Any time before two o’clock to-day, will do,” said the doctor.

She looked at him, with a languid curiosity—nothing more. “Why before two?” she inquired.

“Because this is one of my ‘Visitors’ Days.’ And the Visitors’ time is from two to four.”

“What have I to do with your visitors?”

“Simply this. I think it important that perfectly respectable and perfectly disinterested witnesses should see you, in my house, in the character of a lady who has come to consult me.”

“Your motive seems rather far-fetched. Is it the only motive you have in the matter?”

“My dear, dear lady!” remonstrated the doctor; “have I any concealments from *you*? Surely, you ought to know me better than that?”

“Yes,” she said, with a weary contempt. “It’s dull enough of me not to understand you by this time.—Send word upstairs, when I am wanted.” She left him, and went back to her room.

Two o’clock came; and in a quarter of an hour afterwards the Visitors had arrived. Short as the notice had been, cheerless as the Sanatorium looked to spectators from without, the doctor’s invitations had been largely accepted nevertheless by the female members of the families whom he had addressed. In the miserable monotony of the lives led by a large section of the middle classes of England, anything is welcome to the women which offers them any sort of harmless refuge from the established tyranny of the principle that all human happiness begins and ends at home. While the imperious needs of a commercial country limited the representatives of the male sex, among the doctor’s visitors, to one feeble old man and one sleepy little boy, the women, poor souls, to the number of no less than sixteen—old and young, married and single—had seized the golden opportunity of a plunge into public life. Harmoniously united by the two common objects which they all had in view—in the first place, to look at each other, and in the second place, to look at the Sanatorium—they streamed in neatly dressed procession through the doctor’s dreary iron gates, with a thin varnish over them of assumed superiority to all unlady-like excitement, most significant and most pitiable to see!

The proprietor of the Sanatorium received his visitors in the hall with

Miss Gwilt on his arm. The hungry eyes of every woman in the company overlooked the doctor as if no such person had existed; and, fixing on the strange lady, devoured her from head to foot in an instant.

"My First Inmate," said the doctor, presenting Miss Gwilt. "This lady only arrived late last night; and she takes the present opportunity (the only one my morning's engagements have allowed me to give her) of going over the Sanatorium.—Allow me, ma'am," he went on, releasing Miss Gwilt, and giving his arm to the eldest lady among the visitors. "Shattered nerves — domestic anxiety," he whispered confidentially. "Sweet woman! sad case!" He sighed softly, and led the old lady across the hall.

The flock of visitors followed; Miss Gwilt accompanying them in silence, and walking alone—among them, but not of them—the last of all.

"The grounds, ladies and gentlemen," said the doctor, wheeling round and addressing his audience, from the foot of the stairs, "are, as you have seen, in a partially unfinished condition. Under any circumstances, I should lay little stress on the grounds, having Hampstead Heath so near at hand, and carriage-exercise and horse-exercise being parts of my System. In a lesser degree it is also necessary for me to ask your indulgence for the basement floor, on which we now stand. The waiting-room and study on that side, and the Dispensary on the other (to which I shall presently ask your attention), are completed. But the large drawing-room is still in the decorator's hands. In that room (when the walls are dry—not a moment before) my inmates will assemble for cheerful society. Nothing will be spared that can improve, elevate, and adorn life, at these happy little gatherings. Every evening, for example, there will be music for those who like it."

At this point there was a faint stir among the visitors. A mother of a family interrupted the doctor. She begged to know whether music "every evening" included Sunday evening; and, if so, what music was performed?

"Sacred music, of course, ma'am," said the doctor. "Handel on Sunday evening—and Haydn occasionally, when not too cheerful. But, as I was about to say, music is not the only entertainment offered to my nervous inmates. Amusing reading is provided for those who prefer books."

There was another stir among the visitors. Another mother of a family wished to know whether amusing reading meant novels.

"Only such novels as I have selected and perused myself, in the first instance," said the doctor. "Nothing painful, ma'am! There may be plenty that is painful in real life—but, for that very reason, we don't want it in books. The English novelist who enters my house (no foreign novelist will be admitted) must understand his art as the healthy-minded English reader understands it in our time. He must know that our purer modern taste, our higher modern morality, limits him to doing exactly two things for us, when he writes us a book. All we want

of him is—occasionally to make us laugh; and invariably to make us comfortable.”

There was a third stir among the visitors—caused plainly this time, by approval of the sentiments which they had just heard. The doctor, wisely cautious of disturbing the favourable impression that he had produced, dropped the subject of the drawing-room, and led the way upstairs. As before, the company followed—and, as before, Miss Gwilt walked silently behind them, last of all. One after another, the ladies looked at her with the idea of speaking, and saw something in her face, utterly unintelligible to them, which checked the well-meant words on their lips. The prevalent impression was, that the Principal of the Sanatorium had been delicately concealing the truth, and that his first inmate was mad.

The doctor led the way—with intervals of breathing-time accorded to the old lady on his arm—straight to the top of the house. Having collected his visitors in the corridor, and having waved his hand indicatively at the numbered doors opening out of it on either side, he invited the company to look into any or all of the rooms at their own pleasure.

“Numbers one to four, ladies and gentlemen,” said the doctor, “include the dormitories of the attendants. Numbers four to eight are rooms intended for the accommodation of the poorer class of patients whom I receive on terms which simply cover my expenditure—nothing more. In the cases of these poorer persons among my suffering fellow-creatures, personal piety and the recommendation of two clergymen are indispensable to admission. Those are the only conditions I make; but those I insist on. Pray observe that the rooms are all ventilated, and the bedsteads all iron; and kindly notice as we descend again to the second floor, that there is a door shutting off all communication between the second story and the top story, when necessary. The rooms on the second floor, which we have now reached, are (with the exception of my own room) entirely devoted to the reception of lady-inmates—experience having convinced me that the greater sensitiveness of the female constitution necessitates the higher position of the sleeping apartment, with a view to the greater purity and freer circulation of the air. Here the ladies are established immediately under my care, while my assistant-physician (whom I expect to arrive in a week’s time) looks after the gentlemen on the floor beneath. Observe, again, as we descend to this lower, or first floor, a second door, closing all communication at night between the two stories to every one but the assistant-physician and myself. And now that we have reached the gentlemen’s part of the house, and that you have observed for yourselves the regulations of the establishment, permit me to introduce you to a specimen of my system of treatment next. I can exemplify it practically, by introducing you to a room fitted up, under my own directions, for the accommodation of the most complicated cases of nervous suffering and nervous delusion that can come under my care.”

He threw open the door of a room at one extremity of the corridor,

numbered Four. "Look in, ladies and gentlemen," he said; "and, if you see anything remarkable, pray mention it."

The room was not very large, but it was well lit by one broad window. Comfortably furnished as a bedroom, it was only remarkable among other rooms of the same sort, in one way. It had no fireplace. The visitors having noticed this, were informed that the room was warmed in winter by means of hot-water; and were then invited back again into the corridor, to make the discoveries, under professional direction, which they were unable to make for themselves.

"A word, ladies and gentlemen," said the doctor; "literally a word, on nervous derangement first. What is the process of treatment, when, let us say, mental anxiety has broken you down, and you apply to your doctor? He sees you, hears you, and gives you two prescriptions. One is written on paper, and made up at the chemist's. The other is administered by word of mouth, at the propitious moment when the fee is ready; and consists in a general recommendation to you to keep your mind easy. That excellent advice given, your doctor leaves you to spare yourself all earthly annoyances by your own unaided efforts, until he calls again. Here, my System steps in, and helps you! When I see the necessity of keeping your mind easy, I take the bull by the horns and do it for you. I place you in a sphere of action in which the ten thousand trifles which must, and do, irritate nervous people at home, are expressly considered and provided against. I throw up impregnable moral entrenchments between *Worry* and *You*. Find a door banging in *this* house, if you can! Catch a servant in *this* house, rattling the tea-things when he takes away the tray! Discover barking dogs, crowing cocks, hammering workmen, screeching children *here*—and I engage to close My Sanatorium to-morrow! Are these nuisances laughing matters to nervous people? Ask them! Can they escape these nuisances at home? Ask them! Will ten minutes' irritation from a barking dog or a screeching child, undo every atom of good done to a nervous sufferer by a month's medical treatment? There isn't a competent doctor in England who will venture to deny it! On those plain grounds my System is based. I assert the medical treatment of nervous suffering to be entirely subsidiary to the moral treatment of it. That moral treatment of it, you find here. That moral treatment, sedulously pursued throughout the day, follows the sufferer into his room at night; and soothes, helps, and cures him, without his own knowledge—you shall see how."

The doctor paused to take breath; and looked for the first time since the visitors had entered the house, at Miss Gwilt. For the first time, on her side, she stepped forward among the audience, and looked at him in return. After a momentary obstruction in the shape of a cough, the doctor went on.

"Say, ladies and gentlemen," he proceeded, "that my patient has just come in. His mind is one mass of nervous fancies and caprices, which his friends (with the best possible intentions) have been ignorantly irritating at home. They have been afraid of him, for instance, at night.

They have forced him to have somebody to sleep in the room with him, or, they have forbidden him, in case of accidents, to lock his door. He comes to me the first night, and says, 'Mind, I won't have anybody in my room!'—'Certainly not!'—'I insist on locking my door.'—'By all means!' In he goes, and locks his door; and there he is, soothed and quieted, predisposed to confidence, predisposed to sleep, by having his own way. 'This is all very well,' you may say; 'but suppose something happens, suppose he has a fit in the night, what then?' You shall see! 'Hullo, my young friend!' cried the doctor, suddenly addressing the sleepy little boy. "Let's have a game. You shall be the poor sick man, and I'll be the good doctor. Go into that room, and lock the door. There's a brave boy! Have you locked it? Very good. Do you think I can't get at you if I like? I wait till you're asleep,—I press this little white button, hidden here in the stencilled pattern of the outer wall—the mortice of the lock inside falls back silently against the door-post—and I walk into the room whenever I like. The same plan is pursued with the window. My capricious patient won't open it at night, when he ought. I humour him again. 'Shut it, dear sir, by all means!' As soon as he is asleep, I pull the black handle hidden here, in the corner of the wall. The window of the room inside noiselessly opens, as you see. Say the patient's caprice is the other way—he persists in opening the window when he ought to shut it. Let him! by all means let him! I pull a second handle when he is snug in his bed, and the window noiselessly closes in a moment. Nothing to irritate him, ladies and gentlemen—absolutely nothing to irritate him! But I haven't done with him yet. Epidemic disease, in spite of all my precautions, may enter this Sanatorium, and may render the purifying of the sick-room necessary. Or the patient's case may be complicated by other than nervous malady—say, for instance, asthmatic difficulty of breathing. In the one case, fumigation is necessary: in the other, additional oxygen in the air will give relief. The epidemic nervous patient says, 'I won't be smoked under my own nose!' The asthmatic nervous patient gasps with terror at the idea of a chemical explosion in his room. I noiselessly fumigate one of them; I noiselessly oxygenize the other, by means of a simple Apparatus fixed outside in the corner here. It is protected by this wooden casing; it is locked with my own key; and it communicates by means of a tube with the interior of the room. Look at it!"

With a preliminary glance at Miss Gwilt, the doctor unlocked the lid of the wooden casing, and disclosed inside nothing more remarkable than a large stone jar, having a glass funnel, and a pipe communicating with the wall, inserted in the cork which closed the mouth of it. With another look at Miss Gwilt, the doctor locked the lid again, and asked in the blandest manner, whether his System was intelligible now?

"I might introduce you to all sorts of other contrivances of the same kind," he resumed, leading the way downstairs—"but it would be only the same thing over and over again. A nervous patient who always has

his own way, is a nervous patient who is never worried—and a nervous patient who is never worried, is a nervous patient cured. There it is in a nutshell !—Come and see the Dispensary, ladies ; the Dispensary and the kitchen next ! ”

Once more, Miss Gwilt dropped behind the visitors, and waited alone—looking steadfastly at the Room which the doctor had opened, and at the Apparatus which the doctor had unlocked. Again, without a word passing between them, she had understood him. She knew as well as if he had confessed it, that he was craftily putting the necessary temptation in her way, before witnesses who could speak to the superficially-innocent acts which they had seen, if anything serious happened. The Apparatus, originally constructed to serve the purpose of the doctor's medical crotchets, was evidently to be put to some other use, of which the doctor himself had probably never dreamed till now. And the chances were that before the day was over, that other use would be privately revealed to her at the right moment, in the presence of the right witness. “ Armadale will die this time,” she said to herself as she went slowly down the stairs. “ The doctor will kill him, by my hands.”

The visitors were in the Dispensary when she joined them. All the ladies were admiring the beauty of the antique cabinet ; and, as a necessary consequence, all the ladies were desirous of seeing what was inside. The doctor—after a preliminary look at Miss Gwilt—good-humouredly shook his head. “ There is nothing to interest you inside,” he said. “ Nothing but rows of little shabby bottles containing the poisons used in medicine which I keep under lock and key. Come to the kitchen, ladies, and honour me with your advice on domestic matters below stairs.” He glanced again at Miss Gwilt as the company crossed the hall, with a look which said plainly, “ Wait here.”

In another quarter-of-an-hour, the doctor had expounded his views on cookery and diet, and the visitors (duly furnished with prospectuses) were taking leave of him at the door. “ Quite an intellectual treat ! ” they said to each other, as they streamed out again in neatly-dressed procession through the iron gates. “ And what a very superior man ! ”

The doctor turned back to the Dispensary, humming absently to himself, and failing entirely to observe the corner of the hall in which Miss Gwilt stood retired. After an instant's hesitation, she followed him. The assistant was in the room when she entered it—summoned by his employer the moment before.

“ Doctor,” she said, coldly and mechanically, as if she was repeating a lesson ; “ I am as curious as the other ladies about that pretty cabinet of yours. Now they are all gone, won't you show the inside of it to me ? ”

The doctor laughed in his pleasantest manner.

“ The old story,” he said. “ Blue-Beard's locked chamber, and female curiosity ! (Don't go, Benjamin, don't go.) My dear lady, what interest can you possibly have in looking at a medical bottle, simply because it happens to be a bottle of poison ? ”

She repeated her lesson for the second time.

"I have the interest of looking at it," she said, "and of thinking if it got into some people's hands, of the terrible things it might do."

The doctor glanced at his assistant with a compassionate smile.

"Curious, Benjamin," he said; "the romantic view taken of these drugs of ours by the unscientific mind. My dear lady," he added, turning again to Miss Gwilt, "if *that* is the interest you attach to looking at poisons, you needn't ask me to unlock my cabinet—you need only look about you round the shelves of this room. There are all sorts of medical liquids and substances in those bottles—most innocent, most useful in themselves—which, in combination with other substances and other liquids, become poisons as terrible and as deadly as any that I have in my cabinet under lock and key."

She looked at him for a moment, and crossed to the opposite side of the room.

"Show me one," she said.

Still smiling as good-humouredly as ever, the doctor humoured his nervous patient. He pointed to the bottle from which he had privately removed the yellow liquid on the previous day, and which he had filled up again with a carefully-coloured imitation, in the shape of a mixture of his own.

"Do you see that bottle?" he said; "that plump, round, comfortable-looking bottle? Never mind the name of what is inside it; let us stick to the bottle, and distinguish it, if you like, by giving it a name of our own. Suppose we call it 'our Stout Friend?' Very good. Our Stout Friend, by himself, is a most harmless and useful medicine. He is freely dispensed every day to tens of thousands of patients all over the civilized world. He has made no romantic appearances in courts of law; he has excited no breathless interest in novels; he has played no terrifying part on the stage. There he is, an innocent, inoffensive creature, who troubles nobody with the responsibility of locking him up! *But* bring him into contact with something else—introduce him to the acquaintance of a certain common mineral Substance, of a universally accessible kind, broken into fragments; provide yourself with (say) six doses of our Stout Friend, and pour those doses consecutively on the fragments I have mentioned, at intervals of not less than five minutes. Quantities of little bubbles will rise at every pouring; collect the gas in those bubbles; and convey it into a closed chamber—and let Samson himself be in that closed chamber, our Stout Friend will kill him in half-an-hour! Will kill him slowly, without his seeing anything, without his smelling anything, without his feeling anything but sleepiness. Will kill him, and tell the whole College of Surgeons nothing, if they examine him after death, but that he died of apoplexy or congestion of the lungs! What do you think of *that*, my dear lady, in the way of mystery and romance? Is our harmless Stout Friend as interesting *now* as if he rejoiced in the terrible popular fame of the Arsenic and the Strychnine which I keep locked up there?"

Don't suppose I am exaggerating! Don't suppose I'm inventing a story to put you off with, as the children say. Ask Benjamin, there," said the doctor, appealing to his assistant, with his eyes fixed on Miss Gwilt. "Ask Benjamin," he repeated, with the steadiest emphasis on the next words, "if six doses from that bottle, at intervals of five minutes each, would not, under the conditions I have stated, produce the results I have described?"

The Resident Dispenser, modestly admiring Miss Gwilt at a distance, started and coloured up. He was plainly gratified by the little attention which had included him in the conversation.

"The doctor is quite right, ma'am," he said, addressing Miss Gwilt, with his best bow, "the production of the gas, extended over half an hour, would be quite gradual enough. And," added the Dispenser, silently appealing to his employer to let him exhibit a little chemical knowledge on his own account, "the volume of the gas would be sufficient at the end of the time—if I am not mistaken, sir?—to be fatal to any person entering the room, in less than five minutes."

"Unquestionably, Benjamin," rejoined the doctor. "But I think we have had enough of chemistry for the present," he added, turning to Miss Gwilt. "With every desire, my dear lady, to gratify every passing wish you may form, I venture to propose trying a more cheerful subject. Suppose we leave the Dispensary, before it suggests any more inquiries to that active mind of yours? No? You want to see an experiment? You want to see how the little bubbles are made? Well, well! there is no harm in that. We will let Mrs. Armadale see the bubbles," continued the doctor, in the tone of a parent humouring a spoilt child. "Try if you can find a few of those fragments that we want, Benjamin. I daresay the workmen (slovenly fellows!) have left something of the sort about the house or the grounds."

The Resident Dispenser left the room.

As soon as his back was turned, the doctor began opening and shutting drawers in various parts of the dispensary, with the air of a man who wants something in a hurry, and doesn't know where to find it. "Bless my soul!" he exclaimed, suddenly stopping at the drawer from which he had taken his cards of invitation on the previous day, "what's this? A key? A duplicate key, as I'm alive, of my fumigating Apparatus upstairs! Oh dear, dear, how careless I get," said the doctor, turning round briskly to Miss Gwilt. "I hadn't the least idea that I possessed this second key. I should never have missed it. I do assure you I should never have missed it, if anybody had taken it out of the drawer!" He bustled away to the other end of the room—without closing the drawer, and without taking away the duplicate key.

In silence, Miss Gwilt listened till he had done. In silence, she glided to the drawer. In silence, she took the key and hid it in her apron pocket.

The Dispenser came back, with the fragments required of him, col-

lected in a basin. "Thank you, Benjamin," said the doctor. "Kindly cover them with water, while I get the bottle down."

As accidents sometimes happen in the most perfectly regulated families, so clumsiness sometimes possesses itself of the most perfectly-disciplined hands. In the process of its transfer from the shelf to the doctor, the bottle slipped, and fell smashed to pieces on the floor.

"Oh, my fingers and thumbs!" cried the doctor, with an air of comic vexation, "what in the world do you mean by playing me such a wicked trick as that? Well, well, well—it can't be helped. Have we got any more of it, Benjamin?"

"Not a drop, sir."

"Not a drop!" echoed the doctor. "My dear madam, what excuses can I offer you? My clumsiness has made our little experiment impossible for to-day. Remind me to order some more to-morrow, Benjamin—and don't think of troubling yourself to put that mess to rights. I'll send the man here to mop it all up. Our Stout Friend is harmless enough now, my dear lady—in combination with a boarded floor and a coming mop! I'm so sorry; I really am so sorry to have disappointed you." With those soothing words, he offered his arm, and led Miss Gwilt out of the dispensary.

"Have you done with me for the present?" she asked when they were in the hall.

"Oh dear, dear, what a way of putting it!" exclaimed the doctor. "Dinner at six," he added with his politest emphasis, as she turned from him in disdainful silence, and slowly mounted the stairs to her own room.

A clock of the noiseless sort—incapable of offending irritable nerves—was fixed in the wall, above the first-floor landing, at the Sanatorium. At the moment when the hands pointed to a quarter before six, the silence of the lonely upper regions was softly broken by the rustling of Miss Gwilt's dress. She advanced along the corridor of the first-floor—paused at the covered Apparatus fixed outside the room numbered Four—listened for a moment—and then unlocked the cover with the duplicate key.

The open lid cast a shadow over the inside of the casing. All she saw at first, was what she had seen already—the jar, and the pipe and glass funnel inserted in the cork. She removed the funnel; and, looking about her, observed on the window-sill close by, a wax-tipped wand used for lighting the gas. She took the wand, and, introducing it through the aperture occupied by the funnel, moved it to and fro in the jar. The faint splash of some liquid, and the grating noise of certain hard substances which she was stirring about, were the two sounds that caught her ear. She drew out the wand, and cautiously touched the wet left on it with the tip of her tongue. Caution was quite needless in this case. The liquid was—water.

In putting the funnel back in its place, she noticed something faintly

shining in the obscurely-lit vacant space at the side of the jar. She drew it out, and produced a Purple Flask. The liquid with which it was filled showed dark through the transparent colouring of the glass; and, fastened at regular intervals down one side of the Flask, were six thin strips of paper which divided the contents into six equal parts.

There was no doubt now, that the Apparatus had been secretly prepared for her—the Apparatus of which she alone (besides the doctor) possessed the key.

She put back the Flask, and locked the cover of the casing. For a moment, she stood looking at it, with the key in her hand. On a sudden, her lost colour came back. On a sudden, its natural animation returned, for the first time that day, to her face. She turned and hurried breathlessly upstairs to her room on the second floor. With eager hands, she snatched her cloak out of the wardrobe, and took her bonnet from the box. "I'm not in prison!" she burst out impetuously. "I've got the use of my limbs! I can go—no matter where, as long as I am out of this house!"

With her cloak on her shoulders, with her bonnet in her hand, she crossed the room to the door. A moment more—and she would have been out in the passage. In that moment, the remembrance flashed back on her of the husband whom she had denied to his face. She stopped instantly, and threw the cloak and bonnet from her on the bed. "No!" she said. "The gulph is dug between us—the worst is done!"

There was a knock at the door. The doctor's voice outside, politely reminded her that it was six o'clock.

She opened the door, and stopped him on his way downstairs.

"What time is the train due to-night?" she asked in a whisper

"At ten," answered the doctor, in a voice which all the world might hear, and welcome.

"What room is Mr. Armadale to have when he comes?"

"What room would you like him to have?"

"Number Four."

The doctor kept up appearances to the very last.

"Number Four let it be," he said graciously. "Provided, of course, that Number Four is unoccupied at the time."

* * * *

The evening wore on, and the night came.

At a few minutes before ten, Mr. Bashwood was again at his post; once more on the watch for the coming of the tidal train.

The inspector on duty, who knew him by sight, and who had personally ascertained that his regular attendance at the terminus implied no designs on the purses and portmanteaus of the passengers, noticed two new circumstances in connection with Mr. Bashwood that night. In the first place, instead of exhibiting his customary cheerfulness, he looked anxious and depressed. In the second place, while he was watching for the train, he was to all appearance being watched in his turn, by a slim,

dark, undersized man, who had left his luggage (marked with the name of Midwinter,) at the custom-house department the evening before, and who had returned to have it examined about half an hour since.

What had brought Midwinter to the terminus? and why was he, too, waiting for the tidal train?

After straying as far as Hendon during his lonely walk of the previous night, he had taken refuge at the village inn, and had fallen asleep (from sheer exhaustion) towards those later hours of the morning, which were the hours that his wife's foresight had turned to account. When he returned to the lodging, the landlady could only inform him that her tenant had settled everything with her, and had left (for what destination neither she nor her servant could tell) more than two hours since.

Having given some little time to inquiries, the result of which convinced him that the clue was lost so far, Midwinter had quitted the house, and had pursued his way mechanically to the busier and more central parts of the metropolis. With the light now thrown on his wife's character, to call at the address she had given him as the address at which her mother lived would be plainly useless. He went on through the streets, resolute to discover her, and trying vainly to see the means to his end, till the sense of fatigue forced itself on him once more. Stopping to rest and recruit his strength at the first hotel he came to, a chance dispute between the waiter and a stranger about a lost portmanteau reminded him of his own luggage, left at the terminus, and instantly took his mind back to the circumstances under which he and Mr. Bashwood had met. In a moment more, the idea that he had been vainly seeking on his way through the streets flashed on him. In a moment more, he had determined to try the chance of finding the steward again on the watch for the person whose arrival he had evidently expected by the previous evening's train.

Ignorant of the report of Allan's death at sea; uninformed, at the terrible interview with his wife, of the purpose which her assumption of a widow's dress really had in view, Midwinter's first vague suspicions of her fidelity had now inevitably developed into the conviction that she was false. He could place but one interpretation on her open disavowal of him, and on her taking the name under which he had secretly married her. Her conduct forced the conclusion on him that she was engaged in some infamous intrigue; and that she had basely secured herself beforehand in the position of all others in which she knew it would be most odious and most repellent to him to claim his authority over her. With that conviction he was now watching Mr. Bashwood, firmly persuaded that his wife's hiding-place was known to the vile servant of his wife's vices—and darkly suspecting, as the time wore on, that the unknown man who had wronged him, and the unknown traveller for whose arrival the steward was waiting, were one and the same.

The train was late that night, and the carriages were more than usually crowded when they arrived at last. Midwinter became involved

in the confusion on the platform, and in the effort to extricate himself he lost sight of Mr. Bashwood for the first time.

A lapse of some few minutes had passed before he again discovered the steward talking eagerly to a man in a loose shaggy coat, whose back was turned towards him. Forgetful of all the cautions and restraints which he had imposed on himself before the train appeared, Midwinter instantly advanced on them. Mr. Bashwood saw his threatening face as he came on, and fell back in silence. The man in the loose coat turned to look where the steward was looking, and disclosed to Midwinter, in the full light of the station-lamp, Allan's face!

For the moment they both stood speechless, hand in hand, looking at each other. Allan was the first to recover himself.

"Thank God for this!" he said fervently. "I don't ask how you came here—it's enough for me that you have come. Miserable news has met me already, Midwinter. Nobody but you can comfort me, and help me to bear it." His voice faltered over those last words, and he said no more.

The tone in which he had spoken roused Midwinter to meet the circumstances as they were, by appealing to the old grateful interest in his friend which had once been the foremost interest of his life. He mastered his personal misery for the first time since it had fallen on him, and gently taking Allan aside, asked what had happened.

The answer—after informing him of his friend's reported death at sea—announced (on Mr. Bashwood's authority) that the news had reached Miss Milroy, and that the deplorable result of the shock thus inflicted, had obliged the major to place his daughter in the neighbourhood of London, under medical care.

Before saying a word on his side, Midwinter looked distrustfully behind him. Mr. Bashwood had followed them. Mr. Bashwood was watching to see what they did next.

"Was he waiting your arrival here to tell you this about Miss Milroy?" asked Midwinter, looking back again from the steward to Allan.

"Yes," said Allan. "He has been kindly waiting here, night after night, to meet me, and break the news to me."

Midwinter paused once more. The attempt to reconcile the conclusion he had drawn from his wife's conduct with the discovery that Allan was the man for whose arrival Mr. Bashwood had been waiting, was hopeless. The one present chance of discovering a truer solution of the mystery, was to press the steward on the one available point in which he had laid himself open to attack. He had positively denied on the previous evening that he knew anything of Allan's movements, or that he had any interest in Allan's return to England. Having detected Mr. Bashwood in one lie told to himself, Midwinter instantly suspected him of telling another to Allan. He seized the opportunity of sifting the statement about Miss Milroy on the spot.

"How have you become acquainted with this sad news?" he inquired, turning suddenly on Mr. Bashwood.

"Through the major of course," said Allan, before the steward could answer.

"Who is the doctor who has the care of Miss Milroy?" persisted Midwinter, still addressing Mr. Bashwood.

For the second time the steward made no reply. For the second time, Allan answered for him.

"He is a man with a foreign name," said Allan. "He keeps a Sanatorium near Hampstead. What did you say the place was called, Mr. Bashwood?"

"Fairweather Vale, sir," said the steward, answering his employer as a matter of necessity, but answering very unwillingly.

The address of the Sanatorium instantly reminded Midwinter that he had traced his wife to Fairweather Vale Villas the previous night. He began to see light through the darkness, dimly, for the first time. The instinct which comes with emergency, before the slower process of reason can assert itself, brought him at a leap to the conclusion that Mr. Bashwood—who had been certainly acting under his wife's influence the previous day—might be acting again under his wife's influence now. He persisted in sifting the steward's statement, with the conviction growing firmer and firmer in his mind that the statement was a lie, and that his wife was concerned in it.

"Is the major in Norfolk?" he asked, "or is he near his daughter in London?"

"In Norfolk," said Mr. Bashwood. Having answered Allan's look of inquiry, instead of Midwinter's spoken question, in those words, he hesitated, looked Midwinter in the face for the first time, and added, suddenly, "I object, if you please, to be cross-examined, sir. I know what I have told Mr. Armadale, and I know no more."

The words, and the voice in which they were spoken, were alike at variance with Mr. Bashwood's usual language and Mr. Bashwood's usual tone. There was a sullen depression in his face—there was a furtive distrust and dislike in his eyes when they looked at Midwinter, which Midwinter himself now noticed for the first time. Before he could answer the steward's extraordinary outbreak, Allan interfered.

"Don't think me impatient," he said. "But it's getting late; it's a long way to Hampstead. I'm afraid the Sanatorium will be shut up."

Midwinter started. "You are not going to the Sanatorium to-night!" he exclaimed.

Allan took his friend's hand, and wrung it hard. "If you were as fond of her as I am," he whispered, "you would take no rest, you could get no sleep, till you had seen the doctor, and heard the best and the worst he had to tell you. Poor dear little soul! who knows, if she could only see me alive and well——" The tears came into his eyes, and he turned away his head in silence.

Midwinter looked at the steward. "Stand back," he said. "I want to speak to Mr. Armadale." There was something in his eye which

was not safe to trifle with. Mr. Bashwood drew back out of hearing, but not out of sight. Midwinter laid his hand fondly on his friend's shoulder.

"Allan," he said, "I have reasons——" He stopped. Could the reasons be given before he had fairly realized them himself; at that time, too, and under those circumstances? Impossible! "I have reasons," he resumed, "for advising you not to believe too readily what Mr. Bashwood may say. Don't tell him this, but take the warning."

Allan looked at his friend in astonishment. "It was you who always liked Mr. Bashwood!" he exclaimed. "It was you who trusted him, when he first came to the great house!"

"Perhaps I was wrong, Allan, and perhaps you were right. Will you only wait till we can telegraph to Major Milroy and get his answer? Will you only wait over the night?"

"I shall go mad if I wait over the night," said Allan. "You have made me more anxious than I was before. If I am not to speak about it to Bashwood, I must and will go to the Sanatorium, and find out whether she is or is not there, from the doctor himself."

Midwinter saw that it was useless. In Allan's interests there was only one other course left to take. "Will you let me go with you?" he asked.

"Allan's face brightened for the first time. "You dear, good fellow!" he exclaimed. "It was the very thing I was going to beg of you myself."

Midwinter beckoned to the steward. "Mr. Armadale is going to the Sanatorium," he said, "and I mean to accompany him. Get a cab and come with us."

He waited, to see whether Mr. Bashwood would comply. Having been strictly ordered, when Allan did arrive, not to lose sight of him, and having, in his own interests, Midwinter's unexpected appearance to explain to Miss Gwilt, the steward had no choice but to comply. In sullen submission he did as he had been told. The keys of Allan's baggage were given to the foreign travelling servant whom he had brought with him, and the man was instructed to wait his master's orders at the terminus hotel. In a minute more the cab was on its way out of the station—with Midwinter and Allan inside, and with Mr. Bashwood by the driver on the box.

* * * * *

Between eleven and twelve o'clock that night, Miss Gwilt, standing alone at the window which lit the corridor of the Sanatorium on the second floor, heard the roll of wheels coming towards her. The sound, gathering rapidly in volume through the silence of the lonely neighbourhood, stopped at the iron gates. In another minute she saw the cab draw up beneath her, at the house door.

The earlier night had been cloudy, but the sky was clearing now, and the moon was out. She opened the window to see and hear more clearly. By the light of the moon she saw Allan get out of the cab, and turn round

to speak to some other person inside. The answering voice told her, before he appeared in his turn, that Armadale's companion was her husband.

The same petrifying influence that had fallen on her at the interview with him of the previous day, fell on her now. She stood by the window, white and still, and haggard and old—as she had stood when she first faced him in her widow's weeds.

Mr. Bashwood, stealing up alone to the second floor to make his report, knew, the instant he set eyes on her, that the report was needless. "It's not my fault," was all he said, as she slowly turned her head, and looked at him. "They met together, and there was no parting them."

She drew a long breath, and motioned to him to be silent. "Wait a little," she said; "I know all about it."

Turning from him at those words, she slowly paced the corridor to its furthest end; turned, and slowly came back to him with frowning brow and drooping head—with all the grace and beauty gone from her, but the inbred grace and beauty in the movement of her limbs.

"Do you wish to speak to me?" she asked; her mind far away from him, and her eyes looking at him vacantly as she put the question.

He roused his courage as he had never roused it in her presence yet.

"Don't drive me to despair!" he cried, with a startling abruptness. "Don't look at me in that way, now I have found it out!"

"What have you found out?" she asked, with a momentary surprise in her face, which faded from it again before he could gather breath enough to go on.

"Mr. Armadale is not the man who took you away from me," he answered. "Mr. Midwinter is the man. I found it out in your face yesterday. I see it in your face now. Why did you sign your name, 'Armadale,' when you wrote to me? Why do you call yourself 'Mrs. Armadale' still?"

He spoke those bold words, at long intervals, with an effort to resist her influence over him, pitiable and terrible to see.

She looked at him for the first time with softened eyes. "I wish I had pitied you when we first met," she said gently, "as I pity you now."

He struggled desperately to go on, and say the words to her which he had strung himself to the pitch of saying on the drive from the terminus. They were words which hinted darkly at his knowledge of her past life; words which warned her—do what else she might; commit what crimes she pleased—to think twice before she deceived and deserted him again. In those terms he had vowed to himself to address her. He had the phrases picked and chosen; he had the sentences ranged and ordered in his mind; nothing was wanting but to make the one crowning effort of speaking them—and, even now, after all he had said, and all he had dared, the effort was more than he could compass! In helpless gratitude, even for so little as her pity, he stood looking at her, and wept the silent womanish tears that fall from old men's eyes.

She took his hand and spoke to him—with marked forbearance, but without the slightest sign of emotion on her side.

"You have waited already at my request," she said. "Wait till to-morrow, and you will know all. If you trust nothing else that I have told you, you may trust what I tell you now. *It will end to-night.*"

As she said the words, the doctor's step was heard on the stairs. Mr. Bashwood drew back from her, with his heart beating fast in unutterable expectation. "It will end to-night!" he repeated to himself, under his breath, as he moved away towards the far end of the corridor.

"Don't let me disturb you, sir," said the doctor, cheerfully, as they met. "I have nothing to say to Mrs. Armadale but what you or anybody may hear."

Mr. Bashwood went on, without answering, to the far end of the corridor, still repeating to himself, "It will end to-night!" The doctor passing him in the opposite direction, joined Miss Gwilt.

"You have heard, no doubt," he began in his blandest manner and his roundest tones, "that Mr. Armadale has arrived. Permit me to add, my dear lady, that there is not the least reason for any nervous agitation on your part. He has been carefully humoured, and he is as quiet and manageable as his best friends could wish. I have informed him that it is impossible to allow him an interview with the young lady to-night—but that he may count on seeing her (with the proper precautions) at the earliest propitious hour, after she is awake to-morrow morning. As there is no hotel near, and as the propitious hour may occur at a moment's notice, it was clearly incumbent on me, under the peculiar circumstances, to offer him the hospitality of the Sanatorium. He has accepted it with the utmost gratitude; and has thanked me in a most gentlemanly and touching manner for the pains I have taken to set his mind at ease. Perfectly gratifying, perfectly satisfactory, so far! But there has been a little hitch—now happily got over—which I think it right to mention to you before we all retire for the night."

Having paved the way in those words (and in Mr. Bashwood's hearing) for the statement which he had previously announced his intention of making, in the event of Allan's dying in the Sanatorium, the doctor was about to proceed, when his attention was attracted by a sound below like the trying of a door.

He instantly descended the stairs, and unlocked the door of communication between the first and second floors, which he had locked behind him on his way up. But the person who had tried the door—if such a person there really had been—was too quick for him. He looked along the corridor, and over the staircase into the hall, and discovering nothing, returned to Miss Gwilt, after securing the door of communication behind him once more.

"Pardon me," he resumed, "I thought I heard something downstairs. With regard to the little hitch that I adverted to just now, permit me to inform you that Mr. Armadale has brought a friend here with him, who bears the strange name of Midwinter. Do you know the gentleman at

all?" asked the doctor, with a suspicious anxiety in his eyes, which strangely belied the elaborate indifference of his tone.

"I know him to be an old friend of Mr. Armadale's," she said. "Does he——?" Her voice failed her, and her eyes fell before the doctor's steady scrutiny. She mastered the momentary weakness, and finished her question. "Does he, too, stay here to-night?"

"Mr. Midwinter is a person of coarse manners and suspicious temper," rejoined the doctor, steadily watching her. "He was rude enough to insist on staying here as soon as Mr. Armadale had accepted my invitation."

He paused to note the effect of those words on her. Left utterly in the dark by the caution with which she had avoided mentioning her husband's assumed name to him at their first interview, the doctor's distrust of her was necessarily of the vaguest kind. He had heard her voice fail her—he had seen her colour change. He suspected her of a mental reservation on the subject of Midwinter—and of nothing more.

"Did you permit him to have his way?" she asked. "In your place, I should have shown him the door."

The impenetrable composure of her tone warned the doctor that her self-command was not to be further shaken that night. He resumed the character of Mrs. Armadale's medical referee on the subject of Mr. Armadale's mental health.

"If I had only had my own feelings to consult," he said, "I don't disguise from you that I should (as you say) have shown Mr. Midwinter the door. But on appealing to Mr. Armadale, I found he was himself anxious not to be parted from his friend. Under those circumstances, but one alternative was left, the alternative of humouring him again. The responsibility of thwarting him—to say nothing," added the doctor, drifting for a moment towards the truth, "of my natural apprehension, with such a temper as his friend's, of a scandal and disturbance in the house—was not to be thought of for a moment. Mr. Midwinter accordingly remains here for the night; and occupies (I ought to say, insists on occupying) the next room to Mr. Armadale. Advise me, my dear madam, in this emergency," concluded the doctor, with his loudest emphasis. "What rooms shall we put them in, on the first floor?"

"Put Mr. Armadale in Number Four."

"And his friend next to him, in number three?" said the doctor. "Well! well! well! perhaps they *are* the most comfortable rooms. I'll give my orders immediately. Don't hurry away, Mr. Bashwood," he called out cheerfully as he reached the top of the staircase. "I have left the assistant-physician's key on the window-sill yonder, and Mrs. Armadale can let you out at the staircase door whenever she pleases. Don't sit up late, Mrs. Armadale! Yours is a nervous system that requires plenty of sleep. 'Tired nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep.' Grand line! God bless you—good-night!"

Mr. Bashwood came back from the far end of the corridor—still pondering, in unutterable expectation, on what was to come, with the night.

"Am I to go now?" he asked.

"No. You are to stay. I said you should know all if you waited till the morning. Wait here."

He hesitated and looked about him. "The doctor," he faltered. "I thought the doctor said——"

"The doctor will interfere with nothing that I do in this house to-night. I tell you to stay. There are empty rooms on the floor above this. Take one of them."

Mr. Bashwood felt the trembling fit coming on him again as he looked at her. "May I ask——?" he began.

"Ask nothing. I want you."

"Will you please to tell me——?"

"I will tell you nothing till the night is over and the morning has come."

His curiosity conquered his fear. He persisted.

"Is it something dreadful?" he whispered. "Too dreadful to tell me?"

She stamped her foot with a sudden outbreak of impatience. "Go!" she said, snatching the key of the staircase door from the window-sill. "You do quite right to distrust me—you do quite right to follow me no farther in the dark. Go before the house is shut up. I can do without you." She led the way to the stairs, with the key in one hand, and the candle in the other.

Mr. Bashwood followed her in silence. No one, knowing what he knew of her earlier life, could have failed to perceive that she was a woman driven to the last extremity, and standing consciously on the brink of a Crime. In the first terror of the discovery, he broke free from the hold she had on him—he thought and acted like a man who had a will of his own again.

She put the key in the door, and turned to him before she opened it, with the light of the candle on her face. "Forget me, and forgive me," she said. "We meet no more."

She opened the door, and, standing inside it, after he had passed her, gave him her hand. He had resisted her look, he had resisted her words, but the magnetic fascination of her touch conquered him at the final moment. "I can't leave you!" he said, holding helplessly by the hand she had given him. "What must I do?"

"Come and see," she answered, without allowing him an instant to reflect.

Closing her hand firmly on his, she led him along the first-floor corridor to the room numbered Four. "Notice that room," she whispered. After a look over the stairs to see that they were alone, she retraced her steps with him to the opposite extremity of the corridor. Here, facing the window which lit the place at the other end, was one little room, with a narrow grating in the higher part of the door, intended for the sleeping-apartment of the doctor's deputy. From the position of this room, the grating commanded a view of the bed-chambers down each side of the

corridor, and so enabled the deputy-physician to inform himself of any irregular proceedings on the part of the patients under his care, with little or no chance of being detected in watching them. Miss Gwilt opened the door and led the way into the empty room.

"Wait here," she said, "while I go back upstairs; and lock yourself in, if you like. You will be in the dark—but the gas will be burning in the corridor. Keep at the grating, and make sure that Mr. Armadale goes into the room I have just pointed out to you, and that he doesn't leave it afterwards. If you lose sight of the room for a single moment, before I come back, you will repent it to the end of your life. If you do as I tell you, you shall see me to-morrow, and claim your own reward. Quick with your answer! Is it Yes or No?"

He could make no reply in words. He raised her hand to his lips, and kissed it rapturously. She left him in the room. From his place at the grating he saw her glide down the corridor to the staircase door. She passed through it, and locked it. Then there was silence.

The next sound was the sound of the women-servants' voices. Two of them came up to put the sheets on the beds in Number Three and Number Four. The women were in high good-humour, laughing and talking to each other through the open doors of the rooms. The master's customers were coming in at last, they said, with a vengeance; the house would soon begin to look cheerful, if things went on like this.

After a little, the beds were got ready, and the women returned to the kitchen-floor, on which the sleeping rooms of the domestic servants were all situated. Then there was silence again.

The next sound was the sound of the doctor's voice. He appeared at the end of the corridor, showing Allan and Midwinter the way to their rooms. They all went together into Number Four. After a little, the doctor came out first. He waited till Midwinter joined him, and pointed with a formal bow to the door of Number Three. Midwinter entered the room without speaking, and shut himself in. The doctor, left alone, withdrew to the staircase door and unlocked it—then waited in the corridor, whistling to himself softly, under his breath.

Voices pitched cautiously low became audible in a minute more in the hall. The Resident Dispenser and the Head Nurse appeared, on their way to the Dormitories of the Attendants at the top of the house. The man bowed silently, and passed the doctor; the woman curtseyed silently, and followed the man. The doctor acknowledged their salutations by a courteous wave of his hand; and once more left alone, paused a moment, still whistling softly to himself—then walked to the door of Number Four, and opened the case of the fumigating apparatus fixed near it in the corner of the wall. As he lifted the lid and looked in, his whistling ceased. He took a long purple bottle out, examined it by the gaslight, put it back, and closed the case. This done, he advanced on tiptoe to the open staircase door—passed through it—and secured it on the inner side as usual.

Mr. Bashwood had seen him at the apparatus; Mr. Bashwood had

noticed the manner of his withdrawal through the staircase-door. Again the sense of an unutterable expectation throbbed at his heart. A terror that was slow and cold and deadly crept into his hands, and guided them in the dark to the key that had been left for him in the inner side of the door. He turned it in vague distrust of what might happen next, and waited.

The slow minutes passed, and nothing happened. The silence was horrible; the solitude of the lonely corridor was a solitude of invisible treacheries. He began to count to keep his mind employed—to keep his own growing dread away from him. The numbers, as he whispered them, followed each other slowly up to a hundred, and still nothing happened. He had begun the second hundred; he had got on to twenty—when, without a sound to betray that he had been moving in his room, Midwinter suddenly appeared in the corridor.

He stood for a moment and listened—he went to the stairs and looked over into the hall beneath. Then, for the second time that night, he tried the staircase door, and for the second time found it fast. After a moment's reflection, he tried the doors of the bedrooms on his right hand next, looked into one after the other, and saw that they were empty, then came to the door of the end room in which the steward was concealed. Here again, the lock resisted him. He listened, and looked up at the grating. No sound was to be heard, no light was to be seen inside. "Shall I break the door in," he said to himself, "and make sure? No; it would be giving the doctor an excuse for turning me out of the house." He moved away, and looked into the two empty rooms in the row occupied by Allan and himself, then walked to the window at the staircase end of the corridor. Here, the case of the fumigating apparatus attracted his attention. After trying vainly to open it, his suspicion seemed to be aroused. He searched back along the corridor, and observed that no object of a similar kind appeared outside any of the other bedchambers. Again at the window, he looked again at the apparatus, and turned away from it with a gesture which plainly indicated that he had tried, and failed, to guess what it might be.

Baffled at all points, he still showed no sign of returning to his bed-chamber. He stood at the window, with his eyes fixed on the door of Allan's room, thinking. If Mr. Bashwood, furtively watching him through the grating, could have seen him at that moment in the mind as well as in the body, Mr. Bashwood's heart might have throbbed even faster than it was throbbing now, in expectation of the next event which Midwinter's decision of the next minute was to bring forth.

On what was his mind occupied as he stood alone, at the dead of night, in the strange house?

His mind was occupied in drawing its disconnected impressions together, little by little, to one point. Convinced, from the first, that some hidden danger threatened Allan in the Sanatorium, his distrust—vaguely associated, thus far, with the place itself; with his wife (whom he firmly believed to be now under the same roof with him); with the doctor, who

was as plainly in her confidence as Mr. Bashwood himself—now narrowed its range, and centred itself obstinately in Allan's room. Resigning all further effort to connect his suspicion of a conspiracy against his friend, with the outrage which had the day before been offered to himself—an effort which would have led him, if he could have maintained it, to a discovery of the Fraud really contemplated by his wife—his mind, clouded and confused by disturbing influences, instinctively took refuge in its impressions of facts as they had shown themselves, since he had entered the house. Everything that he had noticed below stairs suggested that there was some secret purpose to be answered by getting Allan to sleep in the Sanatorium. Everything that he had noticed above stairs, associated the lurking-place in which the danger lay hid, with Allan's room. To reach this conclusion, and to decide on baffling the conspiracy, whatever it might be, by taking Allan's place, was with Midwinter the work of an instant. Confronted by actual peril, the great nature of the man intuitively freed itself from the weaknesses that had beset it in happier and safer times. Not even the shadow of the old superstition rested on his mind now—no fatalist suspicion of himself disturbed the steady resolution that was in him. The one last doubt that troubled him, as he stood at the window thinking, was the doubt whether he could persuade Allan to change rooms with him, without involving himself in an explanation which might lead Allan to suspect the truth.

In the minute that elapsed, while he waited with his eyes on the room, the doubt was resolved—he found the trivial, yet sufficient, excuse of which he was in search. Mr. Bashwood saw him rouse himself, and go to the door. Mr. Bashwood heard him knock softly, and whisper, "Allan, are you in bed?"

"No," answered the voice inside, "come in."

He appeared to be on the point of entering the room, when he checked himself as if he had suddenly remembered something. "Wait a minute," he said, through the door, and, turning away, went straight to the end room. "If there is anybody watching us in there," he said aloud, "let him watch us through this!" He took out his handkerchief, and stuffed it into the wires of the grating, so as completely to close the aperture. Having thus forced the spy inside (if there was one) either to betray himself by moving the handkerchief, or to remain blinded to all view of what might happen next, Midwinter presented himself in Allan's room.

"You know what poor nerves I have," he said, "and what a wretched sleeper I am at the best of times. I can't sleep to-night. The window in my room rattles every time the wind blows. I wish it was as fast as your window here."

"My dear fellow!" cried Allan, "I don't mind a rattling window. Let's change rooms. Nonsense! Why should you make excuses to me? Don't I know how easily trifles upset those excitable nerves of yours? Now the doctor has quieted my mind about my poor little Nellie, I begin to feel the journey—and I'll answer for sleeping anywhere till to-morrow

comes." He took up his travelling-bag. "We must be quick about it," he added, pointing to his candle. "They haven't left me much candle to go to bed by."

"Be very quiet, Allan," said Midwinter, opening the door for him. "We mustn't disturb the house at this time of night."

"Yes, yes," returned Allan, in a whisper. "Good night—I hope you'll sleep as well as I shall."

Midwinter saw him into Number Three, and noticed that his own candle (which he had left there) was as short as Allan's. "Good night," he said, and came out again into the corridor.

He went straight to the grating, and looked and listened once more. The handkerchief remained exactly as he had left it, and still there was no sound to be heard within. He returned slowly along the corridor, and thought of the precautions he had taken, for the last time. Was there no other way than the way he was trying now? There was none. Any openly-avowed posture of defence—while the nature of the danger, and the quarter from which it might come, were alike unknown—would be useless in itself, and worse than useless in the consequences which it might produce by putting the people of the house on their guard. Without a fact that could justify to other minds his distrust of what might happen with the night; incapable of shaking Allan's ready faith in the fair outside which the doctor had presented to him, the one safeguard in his friend's interests that Midwinter could set up, was the safeguard of changing the rooms—the one policy he could follow, come what might of it, was the policy of waiting for events. "I can trust to one thing," he said to himself, as he looked for the last time up and down the corridor—"I can trust myself to keep awake."

After a glance at the clock on the wall opposite, he went into Number Four. The sound of the closing door was heard, the sound of the turning lock followed it. Then, the dead silence fell over the house once more.

Little by little; the steward's horror of the stillness and the darkness overcame his dread of moving the handkerchief. He cautiously drew aside one corner of it—waited—looked—and took courage at last to draw the whole handkerchief through the wires of the grating. After first hiding it in his pocket, he thought of the consequences if it was found on him, and threw it down in a corner of the room. He trembled when he had cast it from him, as he looked at his watch, and placed himself again at the grating to wait for Miss Gwilt.

It was a quarter to one. The moon had come round from the side to the front of the Sanatorium. From time to time her light gleamed on the window of the corridor, when the gaps in the flying clouds let it through. The wind had risen, and sung its mournful song faintly, as it swept at intervals over the desert ground in front of the house.

The minute-hand of the clock travelled on half-way round the circle of the dial. As it touched the quarter-past one, Miss Gwilt stepped noiselessly into the corridor. "Let yourself out," she whispered through the

grating, "and follow me." She returned to the stairs by which she had just descended; pushed the door to softly, after Mr. Bashwood had followed her; and led the way up to the landing of the second-floor. There she put the question to him which she had not ventured to put below stairs."

"Was Mr. Armadale shown into Number Four?" she asked.

He bowed his head without speaking.

"Answer me in words. Has Mr. Armadale left the room since?"

He answered, "No."

"Have you never lost sight of Number Four since I left you?"

He answered, "*Nerer.*"

Something strange in his manner, something unfamiliar in his voice, as he made that last reply, attracted her attention. She took her candle from a table near, on which she had left it, and threw its light on him. His eyes were staring, his teeth chattered. There was everything to betray him to her as a terrified man—there was nothing to tell her that the terror was caused by his consciousness of deceiving her, for the first time in his life, to her face. If she had threatened him less openly when she placed him on the watch; if she had spoken less unreservedly of the interview which was to reward him in the morning, he might have owned the truth. As it was, his strongest fears and his dearest hopes were alike interested in telling her the fatal lie that he had now told—the fatal lie which he reiterated when she put her question for the second time.

She looked at him, deceived by the last man on earth whom she would have suspected of deception—the man whom she had deceived herself.

"You seem to be over-excited," she said quietly. "The night has been too much for you. Go upstairs, and rest. You will find the door of one of the rooms left open. That is the room you are to occupy. Good night."

She put the candle (which she had left burning for him) on the table, and gave him her hand. He held her back by it desperately as she turned to leave him. His horror of what might happen when she was left by herself, forced the words to his lips which he would have feared to speak to her at any other time.

"Don't," he pleaded in a whisper; "oh, don't, don't, don't go down-stairs to-night!"

She released her hand, and signed to him to take the candle. "You shall see me to-morrow," she said. "Not a word more now!"

Her stronger will conquered him at that last moment, as it had conquered him throughout. He took the candle, and waited—following her eagerly with his eyes as she descended the stairs. The cold of the December night seemed to have found its way to her through the warmth of the house. She had put on a long heavy black shawl, and had fastened it close over her breast. The plaited coronet in which she wore her hair seemed to have weighed too heavily on her head. She had untwisted it, and thrown it back over her shoulders. The old man looked at her

flowing hair, as it lay red over the black shawl—at her supple, long-fingered hand, as it slid down the banisters—at the smooth, seductive grace of every movement that took her farther and farther away from him. “The night will go quickly,” he said to himself as she passed from his view; “I shall dream of her till the morning comes!”

She secured the staircase door, after she had passed through it—listened, and satisfied herself that nothing was stirring—then went on slowly along the corridor to the window. Leaning on the window-sill, she looked out at the night. The clouds were over the moon at that moment; nothing was to be seen through the darkness but the scattered gaslights in the suburb. Turning from the window, she looked at the clock. It was twenty minutes past one.

For the last time, the resolution that had come to her in the earlier night, with the knowledge that her husband was in the house, forced itself uppermost in her mind. For the last time, the voice within her said, “Think if there is no other way!”

She pondered over it till the minute-hand of the clock pointed to the half-hour. “No!” she said, still thinking of her husband. “The one chance left, is to go through with it to the end. He will leave the thing undone which he has come here to do; he will leave the words unspoken which he has come here to say—when he knows that the act may make me a public scandal, and that the words may send me to the scaffold!” Her colour rose, and she smiled with a terrible irony as she looked for the first time at the door of the Room. “I shall be your widow,” she said, “in half-an-hour!”

She opened the case of the apparatus, and took the Purple Flask in her hand. After marking the time by a glance at the clock, she dropped into the glass funnel the first of the six separate Pourings that were measured for her by the paper slips.

When she had put the Flask back, she listened at the mouth of the funnel. Not a sound reached her ear: the deadly process did its work, in the silence of death itself. When she rose, and looked up, the moon was shining in at the window, and the moaning wind was quiet.

Oh, the time! the time! If it could only have been begun and ended with the first Pouring!

She went downstairs into the hall—she walked to and fro, and listened at the open door that led to the kitchen stairs. She came up again; she went down again. The first of the intervals of five minutes was endless. The time stood still. The suspense was maddening.

The interval passed. As she took the Flask for the second time, and dropped in the second Pouring, the clouds floated over the moon, and the night-view through the window slowly darkened.

The restlessness that had driven her up and down the stairs, and backwards and forwards in the hall, left her as suddenly as it had come. She waited through the second interval, leaning on the window-sill, and

staring, without conscious thought of any kind, into the black night. The howling of a belated dog was borne towards her on the wind, at intervals, from some distant part of the suburb. She found herself following the faint sound as it died away into silence with a dull attention, and listening for its coming again with an expectation that was duller still. Her arms lay like lead on the window-sill; her forehead rested against the glass without feeling the cold. It was not till the moon struggled out again that she was startled into sudden self-remembrance. She turned quickly, and looked at the clock; seven minutes had passed since the second Pouring.

As she snatched up the Flask, and fed the funnel for the third time, the full consciousness of her position came back to her. The fever-heat throbbed again in her blood, and flushed fiercely in her cheeks. Swift, smooth, and noiseless, she paced from end to end of the corridor, with her arms folded in her shawl, and her eye moment after moment on the clock.

Three out of the next five minutes passed, and again the suspense began to madden her. The space in the corridor grew too confined for the illimitable restlessness that possessed her limbs. She went down into the hall again, and circled round and round it like a wild creature in a cage. At the third turn, she felt something moving softly against her dress. The house-cat had come up through the open kitchen-door—a large, tawny, companionable cat that purred in high good temper, and followed her for company. She took the animal up in her arms—it rubbed its sleek head luxuriously against her chin as she bent her face over it. “Armadale hates cats,” she whispered in the creature’s ear. “Come up and see Armadale killed!” The next moment her own frightful fancy horrified her. She dropped the cat with a shudder; she drove it below again with threatening hands. For a moment after, she stood still—then, in headlong haste, suddenly mounted the stairs. Her husband had forced his way back again into her thoughts; her husband threatened her with a danger which had never entered her mind till now. What, if he were not asleep? What if he came out upon her, and found her with the Purple Flask in her hand?

She stole to the door of number three, and listened. The slow, regular breathing of a sleeping man was just audible. After waiting a moment to let the feeling of relief quiet her, she took a step towards Number Four—and checked herself. It was needless to listen at *that* door. The doctor had told her that Sleep came first, as certainly as Death afterwards, in the poisoned air. She looked aside at the clock. The time had come for the fourth Pouring.

Her hand began to tremble violently, as she fed the funnel for the fourth time. The fear of her husband was back again in her heart. What if some noise disturbed him before the sixth Pouring? What if he woke on a sudden (as she had often seen him wake) without any noise at all?

She looked up and down the corridor. The end room, in which Mr. Bashwood had been concealed, offered itself to her as a place of refuge.

"I might go in there!" she thought. "Has he left the key?" She opened the door to look, and saw the handkerchief thrown down on the floor. Was it Mr. Bashwood's handkerchief, left there by accident? She examined it at the corners. In the second corner she found her husband's name!

Her first impulse hurried her to the staircase-door, to rouse the steward, and insist on an explanation. The next moment, she remembered the Purple Flask, and the danger of leaving the corridor. She turned, and looked at the door of number three. Her husband, on the evidence of the handkerchief, had unquestionably been out of his room—and Mr. Bashwood had not told her. Was he in his room now? In the violence of her agitation, as the question passed through her mind, she forgot the discovery which she had herself made not a minute before. Again, she listened at the door; again, she heard the slow regular breathing of the sleeping man. The first time, the evidence of her ears had been enough to quiet her. *This* time, in the tenfold aggravation of her suspicion and her alarm, she was determined to have the evidence of her eyes as well. "All the doors open softly in this house," she said to herself; "there's no fear of my waking him." Noiselessly, by an inch at a time, she opened the unlocked door, and looked in the moment the aperture was wide enough. In the little light she had let into the room, the sleeper's head was just visible on the pillow. Was it quite as dark against the white pillow as her husband's head looked when he was in bed? Was the breathing as light as her husband's breathing when he was asleep?

She opened the door more widely, and looked in by the clearer light.

There lay the man whose life she had attempted for the third time, peacefully sleeping in the room that had been given to her husband, and in the air that could harm nobody!

The inevitable conclusion overwhelmed her on the instant. With a frantic upward action of her hands she staggered back into the passage. The door of Allan's room fell to—but not noisily enough to wake him. She turned as she heard it close. For one moment she stood staring at it like a woman stupefied. The next, her instinct rushed into action, before her reason recovered itself. In two steps she was at the door of Number Four.

The door was locked.

She felt over the wall with both hands, wildly and clumsily, for the button which she had seen the doctor press, when he was showing the room to the visitors. Twice she missed it. The third time her eyes helped her hands—she found the button and pressed on it. The mortice of the lock inside fell back, and the door yielded to her.

Without an instant's hesitation she entered the room. Though the door was open—though so short a time had elapsed since the fourth Pouring, that but little more than half the contemplated volume of gas had been produced as yet—the poisoned air seized her, like the grasp of a hand at her throat, like the twisting of a wire round her head. She found him on the floor at the foot of the bed—his head and one arm were towards the door, as if he had risen under the first feeling of drowsiness, and

had sunk in the effort to leave the room. With the desperate concentration of strength of which women are capable in emergencies, she lifted him and dragged him out into the corridor. Her brain reeled as she laid him down and crawled back on her knees to the room, to shut out the poisoned air from pursuing them into the passage. After closing the door, she waited, without daring to look at him the while, for strength enough to rise and get to the window over the stairs. When the window was opened, when the keen air of the early winter morning blew steadily in, she ventured back to him and raised his head, and looked for the first time closely at his face.

Was it death that spread the livid pallor over his forehead and his cheeks, and the dull leaden hue on his eyelids and his lips?

She loosened his cravat and opened his waistcoat, and bared his throat and breast to the air. With her hand on his heart, with her bosom supporting his head, so that he fronted the window, she waited the event. A time passed: a time short enough to be reckoned by minutes on the clock; and yet long enough to take her memory back over all her married life with him—long enough to mature the resolution that now rose in her mind as the one result that could come of the retrospect. As her eyes rested on him, a strange composure settled slowly on her face. She bore the look of a woman who was equally resigned to welcome the chance of his recovery, or to accept the certainty of his death.

Not a cry or a tear had escaped her yet. Not a cry or a tear escaped her when the interval had passed, and she felt the first faint fluttering of his heart, and heard the first faint catching of the breath at his lips. She silently bent over him and kissed his forehead. When she looked up again, the hard despair had melted from her face. There was something softly radiant in her eyes, which lit her whole countenance as with an inner light, and made her womanly and lovely once more.

She laid him down, and, taking off her shawl, made a pillow of it to support his head. "It might have been hard, love," she said, as she felt the faint pulsation strengthening at his heart. "You have made it easy now."

She rose, and, turning from him, noticed the Purple Flask in the place where she had left it since the fourth Pouring. "Ah," she thought quietly, "I had forgotten my best friend—I had forgotten that there is more to pour in yet."

With a steady hand, with a calm, attentive face, she fed the funnel for the fifth time. "Five minutes more," she said, when she had put the Flask back, after a look at the clock.

She fell into thought—thought that only deepened the grave and gentle composure of her face. "Shall I write him a farewell word?" she asked herself. "Shall I tell him the truth before I leave him for ever?"

Her little gold pencil-case hung with the other toys at her watch-chain. After looking about her for a moment, she knelt over her husband, and put her hand into the breast-pocket of his coat.

His pocket-book was there. Some papers fell from it as she unfas-

tened the clasp. One of them was the letter which had come to him from Mr. Brock's deathbed. She turned over the two sheets of note-paper on which the rector had written the words that had now come true—and found the last page of the last sheet a blank. On that page she wrote her farewell words, kneeling at her husband's side.

"I am worse than the worst you can think of me. You have saved Armadale by changing rooms with him to-night—and you have saved him from Me. You can guess now whose widow I should have claimed to be, if you had not preserved his life; and you will know what a wretch you married when you married the woman who writes these lines. Still, I had some innocent moments—and then I loved you dearly. Forget me, my darling, in the love of a better woman than I am. I might, perhaps, have been that better woman myself, if I had not ~~loved~~ lived a miserable life before you met with me. It matters little now. The one atonement I can make for all the wrong I have done you is the atonement of my death. It is not hard for me to die, now I know you will live. Even my wickedness has one merit—it has not prospered. I have never been a happy woman."

She folded the letter again, and put it into his hand, to attract his attention in that way when he came to himself. As she gently closed his fingers on the paper and looked up, the last minute of the last interval faced her, recorded on the clock.

She bent over him, and gave him her farewell kiss.

"Live, my angel, live!" she murmured tenderly, with her lips just touching his. "All your life is before you—a happy life, and an honoured life, if you are freed from *me*!"

With a last, lingering tenderness, she parted the hair back from his forehead. "It is no merit to have loved you," she said. "You are one of the men whom women all like." She sighed and left him. It was her last weakness. She bent her head affirmatively to the clock, as if it had been a living creature speaking to her—and fed the funnel for the last time, to the last drop left in the Flask.

The waning moon shone in faintly at the window. With her hand on the door of the room, she turned and looked at the light that was slowly fading out of the murky sky.

"Oh, God, forgive me!" she said. "Oh, Christ, bear witness that I have suffered!"

One moment more she lingered on the threshold; lingered for her last look in this world—and turned that look on *him*.

"Good-by!" she said softly.

The door of the room opened—and closed on her. There was an interval of silence.

Then, a sound came dull and sudden, like the sound of a fall.

Then, there was silence again.

* * * * *

The hands of the clock, following their steady course, reckoned the minutes of the morning as one by one they lapsed away. It was the

tenth minute since the door of the room had opened and closed, before Midwinter stirred on his pillow, and, struggling to raise himself, felt the letter in his hand.

At the same moment, a key was turned in the staircase-door. And the doctor, looking expectantly towards the fatal room, saw the Purple Flask on the window-sill, and the prostrate man trying to raise himself from the floor.

THE END OF THE LAST BOOK.

EPILOGUE.

CHAPTER I.

NEWS FROM NORFOLK.

From Mr. Pedgift Senior (Thorpe-Ambrose), to Mr. Pedgift Junior (Paris).

"MY DEAR AUGUSTUS,

"High Street, December 20th

"YOUR letter reached me yesterday. You seem to be making the most of your youth (as you call it) with a vengeance. Well! enjoy your holiday. I made the most of my youth, when I was your age; and, wonderful to relate, I haven't forgotten it yet!

"You ask me for a good budget of news, and especially, for more information about that mysterious business at the Sanatorium.

"Curiosity, my dear boy, is a quality, which (in our profession especially) sometimes leads to great results. I doubt, however, if you will find it leading to much on this occasion. All I know of the mystery at the Sanatorium, I know from Mr. Armadale; and he is entirely in the dark on more than one point of importance. I have already told you how they were entrapped into the house, and how they passed the night there. To this I can now add that something did certainly happen to Mr. Midwinter, which deprived him of consciousness; and that the doctor, who appears to have been mixed up in the matter, carried things with a high hand, and insisted on taking his own course in his own Sanatorium. There is not the least doubt that the miserable woman (however she might have come by her death) was found dead—that a coroner's inquest inquired into the circumstances—that the evidence showed her to have entered the house as a patient—and that the medical investigation ended in discovering that she had died of apoplexy. My idea is, that Mr. Midwinter had a motive of his own for not coming forward with the evidence that he might have given. I have also reason to suspect that Mr. Armadale, out of regard for him, followed his lead, and that the verdict at the inquest (attach-

ing no blame to anybody), proceeded, like many other verdicts of the same kind, from an entirely superficial investigation of the circumstances.

The key to the whole mystery is to be found, I firmly believe, in that wretched woman's attempt to personate the character of Mr. Armadale's widow, when the news of his death appeared in the papers. But what first set her on this, and by what inconceivable process of deception, she can have induced Mr. Midwinter to marry her (as the certificate proves), under Mr. Armadale's name, is more than Mr. Armadale himself knows. The point was not touched at the inquest, for the simple reason that the inquest only concerned itself with the circumstances attending her death. Mr. Armadale, at his friend's request, saw Miss Blanchard, and induced her to silence old Darch on the subject of the claim that had been made relating to the widow's income. As the claim had never been admitted, even our stiff-necked brother practitioner consented for once to do as he was asked. The doctor's statement that his patient was the widow of a gentleman named Armadale, was accordingly left unchallenged, and so the matter has been hushed up. She is buried in the great cemetery, near the place where she died. Nobody but Mr. Midwinter and Mr. Armadale (who insisted on going with him), followed her to the grave; and nothing has been inscribed on the tombstone, but the initial letter of her Christian name, and the date of her death. So, after all the harm she has done, she rests at last—and so the two men whom she has injured have forgiven her.

"Is there more to say on this subject before we leave it? On referring to your letter, I find you have raised one other point, which may be worth a moment's notice.

"You ask if there is reason to suppose that the doctor comes out of the matter with hands which are really as clean as they look? My dear Augustus, I believe the doctor to have been at the bottom of more of this mischief than we shall ever find out; and to have profited by the self-imposed silence of Mr. Midwinter and Mr. Armadale, as rogues perpetually profit by the misfortunes and necessities of honest men. It is an ascertained fact that he connived at the false statement about Miss Milroy, which entrapped the two gentlemen into his house,—and that one circumstance (after my Old Bailey experience) is enough for *me*. As to evidence against him, there is not a jot,—and as to Retribution overtaking him, I can only say I heartily hope Retribution may prove in the long run to be the more cunning customer of the two. There is not much prospect of it at present. The doctor's friends and admirers are, I understand, about to present him with a Testimonial, 'expressive of their sympathy under the sad occurrence which has thrown a cloud over the opening of his Sanatorium, and of their undiminished confidence in his integrity and ability as a medical man.' We live, Augustus, in an age eminently favourable to the growth of all roguery which is careful enough to keep up appearances. In this enlightened nineteenth century, I look upon the doctor as one of our rising men.

"To turn now to pleasanter subjects than Sanatoriums, I may tell you that Miss Nellie is as good as well again, and is, in my humble opinion, prettier than ever. She is staying in London, under the care of a female relative—and Mr. Armadale satisfies her of the fact of his existence (in case she should forget it) regularly every day. They are to be married in the spring—unless Mrs. Milroy's death causes the ceremony to be postponed. The medical men are of opinion that the poor lady is sinking at last. It may be a question of weeks or a question of months, they can say no more. She is greatly altered—quiet and gentle, and anxiously affectionate with her husband and her child. But, in her case, this happy change is, it seems, a sign of approaching dissolution, from the medical point of view. There is a difficulty in making the poor old major understand this. He only sees that she has gone back to the likeness of her better self when he first married her; and he sits for hours by her bedside, now, and tells her about his wonderful clock.

"Mr. Midwinter, of whom you will next expect me to say something, is improving rapidly. After causing some anxiety at first to the medical men (who declared that he was suffering from a serious nervous shock, produced by circumstances about which their patient's obstinate silence kept them quite in the dark), he has rallied, as only men of his sensitive temperament (to quote the doctors again) *can* rally. He and Mr. Armadale are together in a quiet lodging. I saw him last week, when I was in London. His face showed signs of wear and tear, very sad to see in so young a man. But he spoke of himself and his future with a courage and hopefulness, which men of twice his years (if he has suffered, as I suspect him to have suffered) might have envied. If I know anything of humanity, this is no common man—and we shall hear of him yet in no common way.

"You will wonder how I came to be in London. I went up, with a return ticket (from Saturday to Monday) about that matter in dispute at our agent's. We had a tough fight—but, curiously enough, a point occurred to me just as I got up to go; and I went back to my chair, and settled the question in no time. Of course I stayed at Our Hotel in Covent Garden. William, the waiter, asked after you with the affection of a father; and Matilda, the chambermaid, said you almost persuaded her, that last time, to have the hollow tooth taken out of her lower jaw. I had the agent's second son (the young chap you nicknamed Mustapha, when he made that dreadful mess about the Turkish Securities) to dine with me on Sunday. A little incident happened in the evening which may be worth recording, as it connected itself with a certain old lady, who was not 'at home' when you and Mr. Armadale blundered on that house in Pimlico in the bygone time.

"Mustapha was like all the rest of you young men of the present day—he got restless after dinner. 'Let's go to a public amusement, Mr. Pedgift,' says he. 'Public amusement? Why, it's Sunday evening!' says I. 'All right, sir,' says Mustapha. 'They stop acting on the stage, I grant you, on Sunday evening—but they don't stop acting in the

pulpit. Come and see the last new Sunday performer of our time.' As he wouldn't have any more wine, there was nothing else for it, but to go.

"We went to a street at the West End, and found it blocked up with carriages. If it hadn't been Sunday night, I should have thought we were going to the opera. 'What did I tell you?' says Mustapha, taking me up to an open door with a gas star outside and a bill of the performance. I had just time to notice that I was going to one of a series of 'Sunday Evening Discourses on the Poms and Vanties of the World, by A Sinner Who Has Served Them,' when Mustapha jogged my elbow, and whispered, 'Half-a-crown is the fashionable tip.' I found myself between two demure and silent gentlemen, with plates in their hands, uncommonly well-filled already with the fashionable tip. Mustapha patronized one plate, and I the other. We passed through two doors into a long room, crammed with people. And there, on a platform at the farther end holding forth to the audience, was—not a man as I had expected—but a Woman, and that woman, MOTHER OLDERSHAW! You never listened to anything more eloquent in your life. As long as I heard her she was never once at a loss for a word anywhere. I shall think less of oratory as a human accomplishment, for the rest of my days, after that Sunday evening. As for the matter of the sermon, I may describe it as a narrative of Mrs. Oldershaw's experience among dilapidated women, profusely illustrated in the pious and penitential style. You will ask what sort of audience it was. Principally women, Augustus—and, as I hope to be saved, all the old harridans of the world of fashion, whom Mother Oldershaw had enamelled in her time, sitting boldly in the front places, with their cheeks ruddled with paint, in a state of devout enjoyment wonderful to see! I left Mustapha to hear the end of it. And I thought to myself, as I went out, of what Shakespeare says somewhere,—'Lord, what fools we mortals be!'

"Have I anything more to tell you, before I leave off? Only one thing that I can remember.

"That wretched old Bashwood has confirmed the fears I told you I had about him, when he was brought back here from London. There is no kind of doubt that he has really lost all the little reason he ever had. He is perfectly harmless, and perfectly happy. And he would do very well, if we could only prevent him from going out in his last new suit of clothes, smirking and smiling, and inviting everybody to his approaching marriage with the handsomest woman in England. It ends of course in the boys pelting him, and in his coming here crying to me, covered with mud. The moment his clothes are cleaned again, he falls back into his favourite delusion, and struts about before the church gates, in the character of a bridegroom, waiting for Miss Gwilt. We must get the poor wretch taken care of somewhere for the rest of the little time he has to live. Who would ever have thought of a man at his age falling in love? and who would ever have believed that the mischief that woman's beauty has done, could have reached as far in the downward direction as our superannuated old clerk?

"Good-by, for the present, my dear boy. If you see a particularly handsome snuff-box in Paris, remember—though your father scorns Testimonials—he doesn't object to receive a present from his son.

Yours affectionately,

A. PEDGIFT Senr.

"POSTSCRIPT.—I think it likely that the account you mention, in the French papers, of a fatal quarrel among some foreign sailors in one of the Lipari Islands, and of the death of their captain, among others, may really have been a quarrel among the scoundrels who robbed Mr. Armadale, and scuttled his yacht. Those fellows, luckily for society, can't always keep up appearances; and, in their case, Rogues and Retribution do occasionally come into collision with each other."

CHAPTER II.

M I D W I N T E R.

THE spring had advanced to the end of April. It was the eve of Allan's wedding-day. Midwinter and he had sat talking together at the great house till far into the night—till so far that it had struck twelve long since, and the wedding-day was already some hours old.

For the most part, the conversation had turned on the bridegroom's plans and projects. It was not till the two friends rose to go to rest, that Allan insisted on making Midwinter speak of himself. "We have had enough, and more than enough, of *my* future," he began, in his bluntly straightforward way. "Let's say something now, Midwinter, about yours. You have promised me, I know, that if you take to Literature, it shan't part us, and that if you go on a sea voyage, you will remember when you come back that my house is your home. But this is the last chance we have of being together in our old way; and I own I should like to know——" His voice faltered, and his eyes moistened a little. He left the sentence unfinished.

Midwinter took his hand and helped him, as he had often helped him to the words that he wanted, in the bygone time.

"You would like to know, Allan," he said, "that I shall not bring an aching heart with me to your wedding-day? If you will let me go back for a moment to the past, I think I can satisfy you."

They took their chairs again. Allan saw that Midwinter was moved. "Why distress yourself?" he asked kindly—"why go back to the past!"

"For two reasons, Allan. I ought to have thanked you long since for the silence you have observed, for my sake, on a matter that must have seemed very strange to you. You know what the name is which appears on the register of my marriage—and yet you have forbore to speak of it, from the fear of distressing me. Before you enter on your new life, let us come to a first and last understanding about this, I ask you—as one

more kindness to me—to accept my assurance (strange as the thing must seem to you) that I am blameless in this matter ; and I entreat you to believe that the reasons I have for leaving it unexplained, are reasons which, if Mr. Brock was living, Mr. Brock himself would approve.”

In those words, he kept the secret of the two names—and left the memory of Allan's mother, what he had found it, a sacred memory in the heart of her son.

“ One word more,” he went on—“ a word which will take us, this time, from past to future. It has been said, and truly said, that out of Evil may come Good. Out of the horror and the misery of that night you know of, has come the silencing of a doubt which once made my life miserable with groundless anxiety about you and about myself. No clouds, raised by my superstition, will ever come between us again. I can't honestly tell you that I am more willing now than I was when we were in the Isle of Man, to take what is called the rational view of your Dream. Though I know what extraordinary coincidences are perpetually happening in the experience of all of us, still I cannot accept coincidences as explaining the fulfilment of the Visions which our own eyes have seen. All I can sincerely say for myself is, what I think it will satisfy you to know, that I have learnt to view the purpose of the Dream with a new mind. I once believed that it was sent to rouse your distrust of the friendless man whom you had taken as a brother to your heart. I now *know* that it came to you as a timely warning to take him closer still. Does this help to satisfy you that I, too, am standing hopefully on the brink of a new life, and that while we live, brother, your love and mine will never be divided again ? ”

They shook hands in silence. Allan was the first to recover himself. He answered in the few words of kindly assurance which were the best words that he could address to his friend.

“ I have heard all I ever want to hear about the past,” he said ; “ and I know what I most wanted to know about the future. Everybody says, Midwinter, you have a career before you—and I believe that everybody is right. Who knows what great things may happen before you and I are many years older ? ”

“ Who *need* know ? ” said Midwinter, calmly. “ Happen what may, God is all-merciful, God is all-wise. In those words, your dear old friend once wrote to me. In that faith, I can look back without murmuring at the years that are past, and can look on without doubting to the years that are to come.”

He rose, and walked to the window. While they had been speaking together, the darkness had passed. The first light of the new day met him as he looked out, and rested tenderly on his face.

Cinderella.

It is, happily, not only in fairy tales that things sometimes fall out as one could wish, that anxieties are allayed, mistakes explained away, friends reconciled; that people inherit large fortunes, or are found out in their nefarious schemes; that long-lost children are discovered disguised in soot, that vessels come safely sailing into port after the storm; and that young folks who have been faithful to one another, are married off at last. Some of these young couples are not only happily married, but they also begin life in pleasant palaces tastefully decorated, and with all the latest improvements; with convenient cupboards, bath-rooms, back-staircases, speaking-tubes, lifts from one story to another, hot and cold water laid on; while outside lie well-kept parks, and gardens, and flower-beds; and from the muslin-veiled windows they can see the sheep browsing, the long shadowy grass, deer starting across the sunny glades, swans floating on the rivers, and sailing through the lilies and tall white reeds. There are fruit-gardens, too, where great purple plums are sunning on the walls, and cucumbers lying asleep among their cool dark leaves. There are glass-houses where heavy dropping bunches of grapes are hanging, so that one need only open one's mouth for them to fall into it all ready cooked and sweetened. Sometimes, in addition to all these good things, the young couple possess all the gracious gifts of youth, beauty, gay and amiable dispositions. Some one said, the other day, that it seemed as if Fate scarcely knew what she was doing, when she lavished with such profusion every gift and delight upon one pair of heads, while others were left bald, shorn, unheeded, dishevelled, forgotten, dishonoured. And yet the world would be almost too sad to bear, if one did not sometimes see happiness somewhere. One would scarcely believe in its possible existence, if there was nobody young, fortunate, prosperous, delighted; nobody to think of with satisfaction, and to envy a little. The sight of great happiness and prosperity is like listening to harmonious music, or looking at beautiful pictures, at certain times of one's life. It seems to suggest possibilities, it sets sad folks longing, but while they are wishing, still, may be, a little reproachfully, they realize the existence of what perhaps they had doubted before. Fate has been hard to them, but there is compensation even in this life. They tell themselves, "Which of us knows when his turn may come?" Happiness is a fact: it does lie within some people's grasp. To this or that young fairy couple, age, trial, and trouble may be in store; but now at least the present is golden; the innocent delights and triumphs of youth and nature are theirs.

I could not help moralizing a little in this way, when we were staying with young Lulworth and his wife the other day, coming direct from the

struggling dull atmosphere of home to the golden placidity of Lulworth farm. They drove us over to Cliffe Court—another oasis, so it seemed to me, in the arid plains of life. Cliffe Court is a charming, cheerful, Italian-looking house, standing on a hill in the midst of a fiery furnace of geraniums and flower-beds. "It belongs to young Sir Charles Richardson. He is six-and-twenty, and the handsomest man in the county," said Frank.

"Oh, no, Frank; you are joking, surely," said Cecilia; and then she stared, and then blushed in her odd way. She still stared sometimes when she was shy, as she used to do before she married.

So much of her former habits Cecilia had also retained, that as the clock struck eight o'clock every morning a great punctual breakfast-bell used to ring in the outer hall. The dining-room casement was wide open upon the beds of roses, the tea was made, Cecilia, in her crisp white morning dress, and with all her wavy bronze hair curling about her face, was waiting to pour it out, the eggs were boiled, the bacon was sizzling hot upon the plate to a moment; there was no law allowed, not a minute's grace for anybody, no matter how lazy. They had been married a little more than two years, and were quite established in their country home. I wish I could perform some incantation like those of my friends the fairies, and conjure up the old farm bodily with a magic wave of my pen, or by drawing a triangle with a circle through it upon the paper—



as the enchanters do. The most remarkable things about the farm were its curious and beautiful old chimneys—indeed the whole county of Sussex is celebrated for them, and the meanest little cottages have noble-looking stacks all ornamented, carved, and weather-beaten. There were gables also, and stony mullioned windows, and ancient steps with rusty rings hanging to them, affixed there to fasten the bridles of horses that would have run away several hundred years ago, if this precaution had not been taken. And then there were storehouses and ricks and barns, all piled with the abundance of the harvest. The farmyard was alive with young fowls and cocks and hens, and guinea-hens; those gentle little dowagers went about glistening in silver and grey, and Cecilia's geese came clamouring to meet her. I can see it all as I think about it. The old walls are all carved and ornamented, sometimes by art and work of man's hand, sometimes by time and lovely little natural mosses. House-leeks grow in clumps upon the thatch, a pretty girl is peeping through a lattice window, a door is open while a rush of sweet morning scent comes through the shining oaken passage from the herb-garden and orchard behind. Cows with their soft brown eyes and cautious tread are passing on their way to a field across the road. A white horse waiting by his stable-door shakes his head and whinnies.

Frank and Cecilia took us for a walk after breakfast the first morning we came. We were taken to the stables first and the cow-house, and then we passed out through a gate into a field, and crossing the field we got into a copse which skirted it, and so by many a lovely little winding path into the woods. Young Lulworth took our delight and admiration

as a personal compliment. It was all Lulworth property as far as we could see. I thought it must be strangely delightful to be the possessor of such beautiful hills, mist, sunshine and shadow, violet tones, song of birds, and shimmer of foliage; but Frank, I believe, looked at his future prospects from a material point of view. "You see it ain't the poetic part of it which pays," he said. But he appreciated it nevertheless, for Cecilia came out of the woods that morning, all decked out with great convolvulus leaves, changed to gold, which Frank had gathered as we went along and given to her. This year all the leaves were turning to such beautiful colours that people remarked upon it, and said they never remembered such a glowing autumn; even the year when Frank came to Dorlicote was not to compare to it. Browns and russet, and bright amber and gold flecks, berries, red leaves, a lovely blaze and glitter in the woods along the lanes and beyond the fields and copses. All the hills were melting with lovely colour in the clear warm autumn air, and the little nut-wood paths seemed like Aladdin's wonderful gardens, where precious stones hung to the trees; there was a twinkle and crisp shimmer, yellow leaves and golden light, yellow light and golden leaves, red hawthorn, convolvulus-berries, holly-berries beginning to glow, and heaped-up clustering purple black-berries. The snow-berries, or snowy blackthorn fruit, with their soft gloom of colour, were over, and this was the last feast of the year. On the trees the apples hung red and bright, the pears seemed ready to drop from their branches and walls, the wheat was stacked, the sky looked violet behind the yellow ricks. A blackbird was singing like a ripple of water, somebody said. It is hard to refrain from writing of all these lovely things, though it almost is an impertinence to attempt to set them down on paper in long lists, like one of Messrs. Rippon and Burton's circulars. It seemed sad to be sad on such a morning and in such a world, but as we were walking along the high-road on our way back to the farm, we passed a long pale melancholy-looking man riding a big horse, with a little sweet-faced creature about sixteen who was cantering beside him. He took off his hat, the little girl kissed her hand as they passed, nodding a gay triumphant nod, and then we watched them down the hill, and disappearing at the end of the lane.

"I am quite glad to see Ella Ashford out riding with her father again," said Lulworth, holding the garden gate open for us to pass in.

"Mrs. Ashford called here a day or two ago with her daughter," said Cecilia. "They're going to stay at the Ravenhill, she told me. I thought Colonel Ashford was gone, too. I suppose he is come back."

"Of course he is," said Frank, "since we have just seen him with Ella, and of course his wife is away for the same reason."

"The child has grown very thin," said H.

"She has a difficult temper," said Cecilia—who, once she got an idea into her soft, silly head, did not easily get rid of it again. "She is a great anxiety to poor Mrs. Ashford. She is very different, she tells me, to Julia and Lisette Garnier, her own daughters."

"I knew them when they were children. We used to see a great deal of Mrs. Ashford when she was first a widow, and I went to her second wedding."

We were at Paris one year—ten years before the time I am writing of—and Mrs. Garnier lived over us, in a tiny little apartment. She was very poor, and very grandly dressed, and she used to come rustling in to see us. Rustling is hardly the word, she was much too graceful and womanly a person to rustle; her long silk gowns used to ripple, and wave, and flow away as she came and went; and her beautiful eyes used to fill with tears as she drank her tea and confided her troubles to us. H. never liked her; but I must confess to a very kindly feeling for the poor, gentle, beautiful, forlorn young creature, so passionately lamenting the loss she had sustained in Major-General Garnier. He had left her very badly off, although she was well connected, and Lady Jane Pepper-corne, her cousin, had offered her and her two little girls a home at Ravenhill, she used to tell us in her *ploré* manner. I do not know why she never availed herself of the offer. She said once that she would not be doing justice to her precious little ones, to whom she devoted herself with the assistance of an experienced attendant. My impression is, that the little ones used to scrub one another's little ugly faces, and plait one another's little light Chinese-looking tails, while the experienced attendant laced and dressed and adorned, and scented and powdered their mamma. She really was a beautiful young woman, and would have looked quite charming if she had left herself alone for a single instant, but she was always posing. She had dark bright eyes; she had a lovely little arched mouth; and hands so white, so soft, so covered with rings, that one felt that it was indeed a privilege when she said, "Oh, *how* do you do?" and extended two or three gentle confiding fingers. At first she went nowhere except to church, and to walk in the retired paths of the Park de Monceau, although she took in *Galvani* and used to read the lists of arrivals. But by degrees she began to—chiefly to please me, she said—go out a little, to make a few acquaintances. One day I was walking with her down the Champs Elysées, when she suddenly started and looked up at a tall, melancholy-looking gentleman who was passing, and who stared at her very hard; and soon after that it was that she began telling me she had determined to make an effort for her children's sake, and to go a little more into society. She wanted me to take her to Madame de Girouette's, where she heard I was going that evening, and where she believed she should meet an old friend of hers, whom she particularly wished to see again. Would I help her? Would I be so *very* good? Of course I was ready to do anything I could. She came punctual to her time, all grey moire and black lace; a remise was sent for, and we set off, jogging along the crowded streets, with our two lamps lighted, and a surly man, in a red waistcoat and an oilskin hat, to drive us to the Rue de Lille. All the way there, Mrs. Garnier was strange, silent, nervous, excited.

Her eyes were like two shining craters, I thought, when we arrived, and as we climbed up the interminable flights of stairs. I guessed who was the old friend with the grey moustache in a minute: a good, well-looking, sick-looking man, standing by himself in a corner.

I spent a curious evening, distracted between Madame de Girouette's small talk, to which I was supposed to be listening, and Mrs. Garnier's murmured conversation with her old friend in the corner, to which I was vainly endeavouring not to attend.

"My dear, imagine a *bouillon*, surmounted with little tiny flutings all round the bottom, and then three *ruches*, alternating with three little *volants*, with great *choux* at regular intervals; over this a tunic, caught up at the side by a *jardinière*, a *ceinture à la Bébé*."

"When you left us I was a child, weak, foolish, easily frightened and influenced. It nearly broke my heart. Look me in the face, if you can, and tell me you do not believe me," I heard Mrs. Garnier murmuring in a low, thrilling whisper. She did not mean me to hear it; but she was too absorbed in what she was saying to think of all the people round about her.

"Ah, Lydia, what does it matter now?" the friend answered in a sad voice, which touched me somehow. "We have both been wrecked in our ventures, and life has not much left for either of us now."

"It is cut *en biais*," Madame de Girouette went on; "the pieces which are taken out at one end are let in at the other: the effect is quite charming, and the economy is immense."

"For you, you married the person you loved," Lydia Garnier was answering; "for me, out of the wreck, I have at least my children, and a remembrance, and a friend—is it so? Ah, Henry, have I not at least a friend?"

"Everybody wants one," said Madame de Girouette, concluding her conversation, "and they cannot be made fast enough to supply the demand. I am promised mine to wear to-morrow at the opening of the salon, but I am afraid that you have no chance. How the poor thing is overworked—her magazin is crowded—I believe she will leave it all in charge of her première demoiselle, and retire to her campagne as soon as the season is over."

"And you will come and see me, will you not?" said the widow as we went away, looking up. I do not know to this day if she was acting. I believe, to do her justice, that she was only acting what she really felt, as many of us do at times.

I took Mrs. Garnier home as I had agreed. I did not ask any questions. I met Colonel Ashford on the stairs next day, and I was not surprised when, about a week after, Mrs. Garnier came into the drawing-room early one morning, sinking down at my feet in a careless attitude, seized my hand, and said that she had come for counsel, for advice. She had had an offer from a person whom she respected, Colonel Ashford, whom I might have remarked that night at Madame de Girouette's; would I—would I give her my candid opinion; for her children's sake did I not think it would be well to think seriously? . . .

"And for your own, too, my dear," said I. "Colonel Ashford is in Parliament, he is very well off. I believe you will be making an excellent marriage. Accept him by all means."

"Dear friend, since this is your real heartfelt opinion, I value your judgment too highly not to act by its dictates. Once, years ago, there was thought of this between me and Henry. I will now confide to you, my heart has never failed from its early devotion. A cruel fate separated us. I married. He married. We are brought together as by a miracle, but our three children will never know the loss of their parents' love," &c. &c. Glance, hand-pressure, &c.—tears, &c. Then a long, soft, irritating kiss. I felt for the first time in my life inclined to box her ears.

The little Garniers certainly gained by the bargain, and the colonel sat down to write home to his little daughter, and tell her the news.

Poor little Ella, I wonder what sort of anxieties Mrs. Ashford had caused to her before she had been Ella's father's wife a year. Miss Ashford made the best of it. She was a cheery, happy little creature, looking at everything from the sunny side, adoring her father, running wild out of doors, but with an odd turn for house-keeping, and order and method at home. Indeed, for the last two years, ever since she was twelve years old, she had kept her father's house. Languid, gentle, easily impressed, Colonel Ashford was quite curiously influenced by this little daughter. She could make him come and go, and like and dislike. I think it was Ella who sent him into Parliament: she could not bear Sir Rainham Richardson, their next neighbour, to be an M.P., and an oracle, while her father was only a retired colonel. Her ways and her sayings were a strange and pretty mixture of childishness and precociousness. She would be ordering dinner, seeing that the fires were alight in the study and dining-room, writing notes to save her father trouble (Colonel Ashford hated trouble), in her cramped, crooked, girlish hand; the next minute she was perhaps flying, agile-footed, round and round the old hall, skipping up and down the oak stairs, laughing out like a child as she played with her puppy, and dangled a little ball of string under his black nose. Puff, with a youthful bark, would seize the ball and go scuttling down the corridors with his prize, while Ella pursued him with her quick flying feet. She could sing charmingly, with a clear, true, piping voice, like a bird's, and she used to dance to her own singing in the prettiest way imaginable. Her dancing was really remarkable: she had the most beautiful feet and hands, and as she seesawed in time, still singing and moving in rhythm, any one seeing her could not fail to have been struck by the weird-like little accomplishment. Some girls have a passion for dancing—boys have a hundred other ways and means of giving vent to their activity and exercising their youthful limbs, and putting out their eager young strength; but girls have no such chances; they are condemned to walk through life for the most part quietly, soberly, putting a curb on the life

and vitality which is in them. They long to throw it out, they would like to have wings to fly like a bird, and so they dance sometimes with all their hearts, and might, and energy. People rarely talk of the poetry of dancing, but there is something in it of the real inspiration of art. The music plays, the heart beats time, the movements flow as naturally as the branches of a tree go waving in the wind. . . .

One day a naughty boy, who had run away, for a lark, from his tutor and his schoolroom at Cliffe, hard by, and who was hiding in a ditch, happened to see Ella alone in a field. She was looking up at the sky and down at the pretty scarlet and white pimpernels, and listening to the birds; suddenly she felt so strong and so light, and as if she *must* jump about a little, she was so happy, and so she did, shaking her pretty golden mane, waving her poppies high over head, and singing higher and higher, like one of the larks that were floating in mid air. The naughty boy was much frightened, and firmly believed that he had seen a fairy.

"She was all in white," he said afterwards, in an aggrieved tone of voice. "She'd no hat, or anything; she bounded six foot into the air. You never saw anything like it."

Master Richardson's guilty conscience had something to do with his alarm. When his friend made a few facetious inquiries he answered quite sulkily,—“Black pudden? she offered me no pudden or anything else. I only wish you had been there, that's all, then you'd believe a fellow when he says a thing, instead of always chaffing.”

Ella gave up her dancing after the new wife came to Ash Place. It was all so different; she was not allowed any more to run out in the fields alone. She supposed it was very nice having two young companions like Lisette and Julia, and at first, in her kindly way, the child did the honours of her own home, showed them the way which led to her rabbits, her most secret bird's nest, the old ivy-grown smugglers' hole in the hollow. Lisette and Julia went trotting about in their frill trousers and Chinese tails of hair, examining everything, making their calculations, saying nothing, taking it all in (poor little Ella was rather puzzled, and could not make them out). Meantime her new mother was gracefully wandering over the house on her husband's arm, and standing in attitudes admiring the view from the windows, and asking gentle little indifferent questions, to all of which Colonel Ashford replied unsuspectingly enough.

"And so you give the child an allowance? Is she not very young for one? And is this Ella's room? how prettily it is furnished."

"She did it all herself," said her father, smiling. "Look at her rocking-horse, and her dolls' house, and her tidy little arrangements."

The house-keeping books were in a little pile on the table; a very suspicious-looking doll was lying on the bed, so were a pile of towels, half marked, but neatly folded; there was a bird singing in a cage, a squirrel, a little aged dog—Puff's grandmother—asleep on a cushion, some sea-anemones in a glass, gaping with their horrid mouths, strings of birds' eggs were suspended, and whips were hanging up on the walls. There

was a great bunch of flowers in the window, and a long daisy-chain fastened up in festoons round the glass ; and then on the toilette-table there were one or two valuable trinkets set out in their little cases.

"Dear me," said Mrs. Ashford, "is it not a pity to leave such temptation in the way of the servants? Little careless thing—had I not better keep them for her, Henry? they are very beautiful." And Mrs. Ashford softly collected Ella's treasures in her long white hands.

"Ella has some very valuable things," Colonel Ashford said. "She keeps them locked up in a strong box, I believe ; yes, there it is in the corner."

"It had much better come into my closet," Mrs. Ashford said. "Oh, how heavy! Come here, strong-arm, and help me." Colonel Ashford obediently took up the box as he was bid.

"And I think I may as well finish marking the dusters," said Mrs. Ashford, looking round the room as she collected them all in her apron. "The books, of course, are now my duty. I think Ella will not be sorry to be relieved of her cares. Do you know, dear, I think I am glad, for her sake, that you married me, as well as for my own. I think she has had too much put upon her, is a little too decided, too *prononcée* for one so young. One would not wish to see her grow up before the time. Let them remain young and careless while they can, Henry."

So when Ella came back to mark the dusters that she had been hemming, because Mrs. Milton was in a hurry for them and the housemaid had hurt her eye, they were gone, and so were her neat little books that she had taken such pride in, and had been winding up before she gave them to Mrs. Ashford to keep in future ; so was her pretty coral necklace that she wore of an evening ; and her pearls with the diamond clasp ; and her beautiful clear carbuncle brooch that she was so fond of, and her little gold clasp bracelet. Although Eliza and Susan had lived with them all her life long, *they* had never taken her things, poor Ella thought, a little bitterly. "Quite unsuitable, at your age, dearest," Mrs. Ashford murmured, kissing her fondly.

And Ella never got them back any more. Many and many other things there were she never got back, poor child. Ah me! treasures dearer to her than the pretty coral necklace and the gold clasp bracelet—liberty, confidence—the tender atmosphere of admiring love in which she had always lived, the first place in her father's heart. That should never be hers again some one had determined.

The only excuse for Mrs. Ashford is that she was very much in love with her husband, and so selfishly attached to him that she grudged the very care and devotion which little Ella had spent upon her father all these years past. Every fresh proof of thought and depth of feeling in such a childish little creature hurt and vexed the other woman. Ella must be taught her place, this lady determined, not in so many words. Alas! if we could always set our evil thoughts and schemes to work, it would perhaps be well with us, and better far than drifting, unconscious and unwarned, into nameless evil, unowned to oneself, scarcely recognised.

And so the years went by. Julia and Lisette grew up into two great tall fashionable bouncing young ladies; they pierced their ears, turned up their pigtailed, and dressed very elegantly. Lisette used to wear a coral necklace, Julia was partial to a clear carbuncle brooch her mother gave her. Little Ella, too, grew up like a little green plant springing up through the mild spring rains and the summer sunshine, taller and prettier and sadder, every year. And yet perhaps it was as well after all that early in life she had to learn to be content with a very little share of its bounties: she might have been spoilt and over-indulged if things had gone on as they began, if nothing had ever thwarted her, and if all her life she had had her own way. She was a bright smiling little thing for all her worries, with a sweet little face; indeed her beauty was so remarkable, and her manner so simple and charming, that Julia and Lisette, who were a year or two her elders, used to complain to their mother nobody ever noticed them when Ella was by. Lady Jane Peppercorne, their own cousin, was always noticing her, and actually gave her a potato off her own plate the other day.

"I fear she is a very forward, designing girl. I shall not think of taking her out in London this year," Mrs. Ashford said, with some asperity; "nor shall I allow her to appear at our crôquet party next week. She is far too young to be brought out."

So Ella was desired to remain in her own room on this occasion. She nearly cried, poor little thing, but what could she do? her father was away, and when he came back Mrs. Ashford would be sure to explain everything to him. Mrs. Ashford had explained life in so strangely ingenious a manner that he had got to see it in a very topsy-turvy fashion. Some things she had explained away altogether, some she had distorted and twisted, poor little Ella had been explained and explained, until there was scarcely anything of her left at all. Poor child, she sometimes used to think she had not a single friend in the world, but she would chide herself for such fancies: it must be fancy. Her father loved her as much as ever, but he was engrossed by business, and it was not to be expected he should show what he felt before Julia and Lisette, who might be hurt. And then Ella would put all her drawers in order, or sew a seam, or go out and pull up a bedful of weeds to chase such morbid fancies out of her mind.

Lady Jane Peppercorne, of whom mention has been already made, had two houses, one in Onslow Square, another at Hampstead. She was very rich, she had never married, and was consequently far more sentimental than ladies of her standing usually are. She was a flighty old lady, and lived sometimes at one house, sometimes at the other, sometimes at hotels here and there, as the fancy seized her. She was very kind as well as flighty, and was constantly doing generous things, and trying to help any one who seemed to be in trouble or who appeared to wish for anything she had it in her power to grant.

So when Mrs. Ashford said,—“Oh, Lady Jane, pity me! My husband says he cannot afford to take me to town this year. I should so like to go, for the dear girls' sake of course——” Lady Jane gave a little grunt, and said,—“I will lend you my house in Onslow Square, if you like—that is, if you keep my room ready for me in case I want to come up at any time. But I daresay you won't care for such an unfashionable quarter of the world.”

“Oh, Lady Jane, how exceedingly kind, how very delightful and unexpected!” cried Mrs. Ashford, who had been hoping for it all the time, and who hastened to communicate the news to Lisette and Julia.

“I shall want a regular outfit, mamma,” said Julia, who was fond of dress. “Perhaps we shall meet young Mr. Richardson in town.”

“I shall be snapped up directly by some one, I expect,” said Lisette, who was very vain, and thought herself irresistible.

“Am I to come, too?” asked Ella, timidly, from the other end of the room, looking up from her sewing.

“I do not know,” replied her stepmother, curtly, and Ella sighed a little wistfully, and went on stitching.

“At what age shall you let me come out?” she presently asked, shyly.

“When you are fit to be trusted in the world, and have cured your unruly temper,” said Mrs. Ashford. Ella's eyes filled with tears, and she blushed up; but her father came into the room, and she smiled through her tears, and thought to herself that since her temper was so bad, she had better begin to rule it that very instant. . . .

It is a bright May morning after a night of rain, and although this is London and not the country any more, Onslow Square looks bright and clean. Lady Jane has had the house smartly done up: clean chintz, striped blinds, a balcony full of mignonette. She has kept two little rooms for herself and her maid, but all the rest of the house is at the Ashfords' disposal. Everybody is satisfied, and Ella is enchanted with her little room upstairs. Mrs. Ashford is making lists of visits and dinner-parties and milliners' addresses; Lisette is looking out of window at some carriages which are passing; the children and nurses are sitting under the trees in the square; Julia is looking at herself in the glass and practising her court curtsies; and Ella is in the back-room arranging a great heap of books in a bookcase. “I should so like to go to the Palace, mamma,” she says, and looking up with a smudgy face, for the books were all dirty and covered with dust. “Do you think there will be room for me?”

Ella had no proper pride, as it is called, and always used to take it for granted she was wanted, and that some accident prevented her from going with the others. “I am sorry there is no room for you, Ella,” said Mrs. Ashford, in her deep voice; “I have asked Mr. Richardson to come with us, and if he fails, I promised to call for the Countess Bricabrac. Pray, if you do not care for walking in the square this afternoon, see

that my maid puts my things properly away in the cupboards, as well as Julia's and Lisette's, and help her to fold the dresses, because it is impossible for one person to manage these long trains unassisted."

"Very well," said Ella, cheerfully. "I hope you will have a pleasant day. How nice it must be to be going."

"I wish you would learn not to wish for everything and anything that you happen to hear about, Ella," said Mrs. Ashford. "If you hear any visitors coming, go away, for I cannot allow you to be seen in this dirty state."

"There's a ring," said Ella, gathering some of the books together. "Good-by."

Young Mr. Richardson, who was announced immediately after, passed a pretty maid-servant, carrying a great pile of folios upon the stairs. She looked so little fitted for the task that he involuntarily stopped and said, "Can I assist you?" The little maid smiled, and shook her head, without speaking. "What a charming little creature!" thought Mr. Richardson. He came to say that he and his friend, Jack Prettyman, were going to ride down together, and would join the ladies at the Palace.

"We are to pick Colonel Ashford up at his club," Mrs. Ashford said, "and Madame de Bricabrac. I shall count upon you then." And the young ladies waved him gracious *au revoir*s from the balcony.

"Oh! don't you like white waistcoats, Julia?" said Lisette, as she watched him down the street.

They are gone. Ella went up to help with the dresses, but presently the maid said in her rude way that she must go down to dinner, and she could not have anybody messing the things about while she was away. Carter hated having a "spy" set over her, as she called Miss Ashford. The poor little spy went back to the drawing-room. She was too melancholy and out of spirits to dress herself and go out. Her face was still smudgy, and she had cried a little over Lisette's pink tarlatane. Her heart sank down, down, down. She did so long for a little fun and delight, and laughter and happiness. She knew her father would say, "Where is Ella?" and her mother would answer, "Oh, I really cannot account for Ella's fancies. She was sulky this morning again. I cannot manage her strange tempers."

The poor child chanced to see her shabby face and frock and tear-stained cheeks in one of the tall glasses over the gilt tables. It was very silly, but the woe-gone little face touched her so; she was so sorry for it that all of a sudden she burst out sob, sob, sob, crying, "Oh, how nice it must be to be loved and cherished, and very happy," she thought. "Oh, I could be so good if they would only love me." She could not bear to think more directly of her father's change of feeling. She sat down on the floor, as she had a way of doing, all in a little heap, staring at the empty grate. The fire had burnt out, and no one had thought of relighting it. For a few minutes her tears overflowed, and she cried and cried in two rivulets down her black little face. She thought how forlorn

she was, what a dull life she led, how alone she lived—such a rush of regret and misery overpowered her, that she hid her face in her hands, unconscious of anything else but her own sadness. . . .

She did not hear the bell ring, nor a carriage stop, nor Lady Jane's footsteps. She came across the room and stood looking at her. "Why, my dear little creature, what is the matter?" said the old lady at last. "Crying? don't you know it is very naughty to cry, no matter how bad things are? Are they all gone—are you all alone?"

Ella jumped up, quite startled, blushed, wiped her tears in a smudge. "I thought nobody would see me cry," she said, "for they are all gone to the Crystal Palace."

"And did they leave you behind quite by yourself?" the old lady asked.

"They were so sorry they had no room for me,"ⁿ said good-natured little Ella. She could not bear to hear people blamed. "They had promised Madame de Bricabrac."

"Is that all?" said Lady Jane, in her kind imperious way. "Why, I have driven in from Hampstead on purpose to go there too. There's a great flower-show to-day, and you know I am a first-rate gardener. I've brought up a great hamper of things. Put on your bonnet, wash your face, and come along directly. I've plenty of room. Who is that talking in that rude way?" for at that instant Carter called out from the drawing-room door, without looking in,—

"Now then, Miss Ella, you can come and help me fold them dresses. I'm in a hurry."

Carter was much discomposed when Lady Jane appeared, irate, dignified.

"Go upstairs directly, and do not forget yourself again," said the old lady.

"Oh, I think I ought to go and fold up the dresses," said Ella, hesitating, flushing, blushing, and looking more than grateful. "How very very kind of you to think of me. I'm afraid they wouldn't—I'm afraid I've no bonnet. Oh, thank you, I—but——"

"Nonsense, child," said Lady Jane; "my maid shall help that woman. Here," ringing the bell violently, to the footman,—“what have you done with the hamper I brought up? let me see it unpacked here immediately. Can't trust those people, my dear—always see to everything myself."

All sorts of delicious things, scents, colours, spring-flowers and vegetables came out of the hamper in delightful confusion. It was a hamper full of treasures—sweet, bright, delicious-tasted—asparagus, daffodillies, bluebells, salads, cauliflowers, hot-house flowers, cowslips from the fields, azalias. Ella's natty little fingers arranged them all about the room in plates and in vases so perfectly and so quickly, that old Lady Jane cried out in admiration,—

"Why, you would be a first-rate girl, if you didn't cry. Here, you

John, get some bowls and trays for the vegetables, green pease, strawberries; and oh, here's a cucumber and a nice little early pumpkin. I had it forced, my dear. Your stepmother tells me she is passionately fond of pumpkins. Here, John, take all this down to the cook; tell her to put it in a cool larder, and order the carriage and horses round directly. Now then," to Ella, briskly, "go and put your things on, and come along with me. *I'll* make matters straight. I always do. There, go directly. I can't have the horses kept. Raton, my coachman, is terrible if he is kept waiting—frightens me to death by his driving when he is put out."

Ella did not hesitate a moment longer; she rushed upstairs; her little feet flew as they used to do formerly. She came down in a minute, panting, rapturous, with shining hair and a bright face, in her very best Sunday frock, cloak, and hat. Shabby enough they were, but she was too happy, too excited, to think about the deficiencies in her toilet.

"Dear me, this will never do, I see," said the old lady, looking at her disapprovingly; but she smiled so kindly as she spoke, that Ella was not a bit frightened.

"Indeed, I have no other," she said.

"John," cried the old lady, "where is my maid? Desire her to come and speak to me directly. Now then, sir!"

All her servants knew her ways much too well not to fly at her commands. A maid appeared as if by magic.

"Now, Batter, be quick; get that blue and silver bournous of mine from the box upstairs—it will look very nice; and a pair of grey kid gloves, Batter; and let me see, my dear, you wouldn't look well in a brocade. No, that grey satin skirt, Batter; her own white bodice will do, and we can buy a bonnet as we go along. Now, quick; am I to be kept waiting all day?"

Ella in a moment found herself transformed somehow into the most magnificent lady she had seen for many a day. It was like a dream, she could hardly believe it; she saw herself move majestically, sweeping in silken robes across the very same pier-glass, where a few minutes before she had looked at the wretched little melancholy creature, crying with a dirty face, and watched the sad tears flowing. . . .

"Now then—now then," cried Lady Jane, who was always saying "Now then," and urging people on—"where's my page—are the outriders there? They are all workhouse boys, my dear; they came to me as thin and starved as church mice, and then I fatten them up and got 'em situations. I always go with outriders. One's obliged to keep up a certain dignity in these Chartist days—universal reform—suffrage—vote by ballot. I've no patience with Mr. Gladstone, and it all rests with us to keep ourselves well aloof. Get in, get in! Drive to Sydenham, if you please."

Lady Jane's manners entirely changed when she spoke to Raton. And it is a fact that coachmen from their tall boxes rule with a very high hand, and most ladies tremble before them. Raton looked very alarming in his wig, with his shoebuckles and great red face.

What a fairy tale it was! There was little Ella sitting in this lovely chariot, galloping down the Brompton Road, with all the little boys cheering and hurrahing; and the little outriders clattering on ahead, and the old lady sitting bolt upright as pleased as Punch. She really *had* been going to Sydenham; but I think if she had not, she would have set off instantly, if she thought she would make anybody happy by so doing. They stopped at a shop in the Brompton Road—the wondering shopwoman came out.

"A white bonnet, if you please," said Lady Jane. "That will do very well. Here, child, put it on, and mind you don't crease the strings." And then away and away they went once more through the town, the squares, over the bridges. They saw the ships and steamers coming down the silver Thames, but the carriage never stopped: the outriders paid the tolls and clattered on ahead. They rolled along pleasant country lanes and fields, villas and country-houses, road-side inns and pedestrians, and crawling carts and carriages. At the end of three-quarters of an hour, during which it seemed to Ella as if the whole gay *cortège* had been flying through the air, they suddenly stopped at last, at the great gates of a Crystal Palace blazing in the sun and standing on a hill. A crowd was looking on. All sorts of grand people were driving up in their carriages; splendid ladies were passing in. Two gentlemen in white waistcoats were dismounting from their horses just as Ella and Lady Jane were arriving. They rushed up to the carriage-door, and helped them to the ground.

"And pray, sir, who are you?" said Lady Jane, as soon as she was safely deposited on her two little flat feet with the funny old-fashioned shoes.

The young man coloured up and bowed. "You don't remember me, Lady Jane," he said. "Charles Richardson—I have had the honour of meeting you at Ash Place, and at Cliffe, my uncle's house. This is my friend Mr. Prettyman."

"This is Mr. Richardson, my dear Ella, and that is Mr. Prettyman. Tell them to come back in a couple of hours" (to the page), "and desire Raton to see that the horses have a feed. Now then—yes—give her your arm, and you are going to take me?—very well," to the other white waistcoat; and so they went into the palace.

What are young princes like now-a-days? Do they wear diamond aigrettes, swords at their sides, top-boots, and little short cloaks over one shoulder? The only approach to romance that I can see, is the flower in their button-hole, and the nice little moustaches and curly beards in which they delight. But all the same besides the flower in the button, there is also, I think, a possible flower of sentiment still growing in the soft hearts of princes in these days, as in the old days long, long ago.

Charles Richardson was a short ugly little man, very gentlemanlike, and well dressed. He was the next heir to a baronetcy; he had a pale face and a snub nose, and such a fine estate in prospect—Cliffe Court its name was—that I do not wonder at Miss Lisette's admiration for

him. As for Ella, she thought how kind he had been on the stairs that morning; she thought what a bright genial smile he had. How charming he looked, she said to herself; no, never, never, had she dreamt of any one so nice. She was quite—more than satisfied, no prince in romance would have seemed to her what this one was, there actually walking beside her. As for Richardson himself, it was a case of love at first sight. He had seen many thousand young ladies in the last few years, but not one of them to compare with this sweet-faced, ingenuous, tender, bright little creature. He offered her his arm, and led her along.

Ella observed that he said a few words to his friend; she little guessed their purport. "You go first," he whispered, "and if you see the Ashfords get out of the way. I should have to walk with those girls, and my heart is here transfixed for ever." . . . "Where have I seen you before?" he went on, talking to Ella, as they roamed through the beautiful courts and gardens, among fountains and flowers, and rare objects of art. "Forgive me for asking you, but I must have met you somewhere long ago, and have never forgotten you. I am haunted by your face." Ella was too much ashamed to tell him where and how it was they had met that very morning. She remembered him perfectly, but she thought he would rush away and leave her, if she told him that the untidy little scrub upon the stairs had been herself. And she was so happy: music playing, flowers blooming, the great wonderful fairy palace flashing over head; the kind, clever, delightful young man to escort her; the gay company, the glitter, the perfume, the statues, the interesting figures of Indians, the dear dear, kind Lady Jane to look to for sympathy and for good-humoured little nods of encouragement. She had *never* been so happy; she had never known what a wonder the palace might be. Her heart was so full. It was all so lovely, so inconceivably beautiful and delightful, that she was nearly tipsy with delight; her head turned for an instant, and she clung to young Richardson's protecting arm.

"Are you faint—are you ill?" he said, anxiously.

"Oh, no!" said Ella, "it's only that everything is so beautiful; it is almost more than I can bear. I—I am not often so happy; oh, it is so charming! I do not think anything could be so delightful in all the world." She looked herself so charming and unconscious as she spoke, looking up with her beautiful face out of her white bonnet, that the young fellow felt as if he *must* propose to her, then and there, off-hand, on the very spot; and at the instant he looked up passionately—O horror!—he caught sight of the Ashfords, mother, daughters, Madame de Bricabrac, all in a row, coming right down upon them.

"Prettyman, this way to the right," cried little Richardson, desperately; and Prettyman, who was a good-natured fellow, said, "This way, please, Lady Jane; there's some people we want to avoid over there."

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"I'm sure it was," Lisette said. "I knew the colour of his waistcoat. Who could he have been walking with, I wonder?"

"Some lady of rank, evidently," said Julia. "I think they went up into the gallery in search of us."

"Let us go into the gallery, dears," said Mrs. Ashford, and away they trudged.

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The young men and their companions had gone into the Tropics, and meanwhile were sitting under a spreading palm-tree, eating pink ices; while the music played and played more delightfully, and all the air was full of flowers and waltzes, of delight, of sentiment. To young Richardson the whole palace was Ella in everything, in every sound, and flower and fountain; to Ella, young Richardson seemed an enormous giant, and his kind little twinkling eyes were shining all round her.

Poor dear! she was so little used to being happy, her happiness almost overpowered her.

"Are you going to the ball at Guildhall, to-morrow?" Mr. Richardson was saying to his unknown princess. "How shall I ever meet you again? will you not tell me your name? But——"

"I wonder what o'clock it is, and where your mother can be, Ella," said Lady Jane; "it's very odd we have not met."

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"I can't imagine where they can have hid themselves," said Julia, very crossly, from the gallery overhead.

"I'm so tired, and I'm ready to drop," said Miss Lisette.

"Oh, let us sit," groaned Madame de Bricabrac. "I can walk no more; what does it matter if we do not find your friends?"

"If we take our places at the door," said Lisette, "we shall be sure to catch them as they pass."

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"Perhaps I may be able to go to the ball," said the princess, doubtfully. "I—I don't know." Lady Jane made believe not to be listening. The voices in the gallery passed on. Lady Jane having finished her ice, pulled out her little watch, and gave a scream of terror. "Heavens! my time is up," she said. "Raton will frighten me out of my wits, driving home. Come, child, come—come—come. Make haste—thank these gentlemen for their escort," and she went skurrying along, a funny little active figure, followed by the breathless young people. They got to the door at last, where Raton was waiting, looking very ferocious. "Oh, good-by," said Ella. "Thank you so much," as Richardson helped her into the chariot.

"And you will not forget me?" he said, in a low voice. "I shall not need any name to remember you by."

"My name is Ella," she answered, blushing, and driving off; and then Ella flung her arms round Lady Jane, and began to cry again, and said, "Oh, I have been so happy! so happy! How good, good of you to make me so happy! Oh, thank you, dear Lady Jane!"

The others came back an hour after them, looking extremely cross,

and were much surprised to find Lady Jane in the drawing-room. "I am not going back till Wednesday," said the old lady. "I've several things to do in town. . . . Well, have you had a pleasant day?"

"Not at all," said Mrs. Ashford plaintively. "The colonel deserted us; we didn't find our young men till just as we were coming away. We are all very tired, and want some supper. Some of your delicious fruit, Lady Jane."

"Oh, dear, how tired I am!" said Julia.

"Poor Richardson was in very bad spirits," said Lisette.

"What a place it is for losing one another," said old Lady Jane. "I took Ella there this afternoon, and though I looked about I couldn't see you anywhere."

"Ella!" cried the other girls, astonished; "was *she* there?" . . . But they were too much afraid of Lady Jane to object more openly.

That evening, after the others left the room, as Ella was pouring out the tea, she summoned up courage to ask whether she might go to the ball at Guildhall with the others next evening. "Pray, pray, please take me," she implored. Mrs. Ashford looked up amazed at her audacity.

Poor little Ella! refused, scorned, snubbed, wounded, pained, and disappointed. She finished pouring out the tea in silence, while a few bitter scalding tears dropped from her eyes into the teacups. Colonel Ashford drank some of them, and asked for more sugar to put into his cup.

"There, never mind," he said, kindly. He felt vexed with his wife, and sorry for the child; but he was, as usual, too weak to interfere. "You know you are too young to go into the world, Ella. When your sisters are married, then *your* turn will come."

Alas! would it ever come? The day's delight had given her a longing for more; and now she felt the beautiful glittering vision was only a vision, and over already: the cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palace; and the charming prince himself—was he a vision too? Ah! it was too sad to think of. Presently Lisette and Julia came back: they had been upstairs to see about their dresses.

"I shall wear my bird-of-paradise, and my yellow tarlatane," said Lisette; "gold and purple is such a lovely contrast."

"Gobert has sent me a lovely thing," said Julia; "tricolour flounces all the way up—she has so much taste."

Good old Lady Jane asked her maid next morning if any dress was being got ready for Miss Ella. Hearing that she was not going, and that no preparations were being made, she despatched Batter on a secret mission, and ordered her carriage at nine o'clock that evening. She went out herself soon after breakfast in a hired brougham, dispensing with the outriders for once. Ella was hard at work all day for her sisters: her little fingers quilled, fluted, frilled, pleated, pinned, tacked the trimmings on their dresses more dexterously than any dressmaker or maid-servant could do. She looked so pretty, so kind, and so tired, so wistful, as she came to help

them to dress, that Lisette was quite touched, and said,—“Well, Ella, I shouldn't wonder if, after I am snapped up, you were to get hold of a husband some day. I daresay *some* people might think you nice-looking.”

“Oh, do you think so really, Lisette?” said Ella, quite pleased; and then fluttering, “Do you think . . . Shall you see Mr. Richardson?”

“Of course I shall,” said Lisette. “He was talking great nonsense yesterday after we found him; saying that he had met with perfection at last—very devoted altogether; scarcely spoke to me at all; but that is the greatest proof of devotion, you know. I know what he meant very well. I shouldn't be at all surprised if he was to propose to-night. I don't know whether I shall have him. I'm always afraid of being thrown away,” said Lisette, looking over her shoulder at her train.

Ella longed to send a message, a greeting of some sort, to Lisette's adorer. Oh, how she envied her; what would she not have given to be going too? . . .

“What! are not you dressing, child?” said Lady Jane, coming into the room. “Are they again obliged to call for Madame de Bricabrac? I had looked up a pair of shoebuckles for you in case you went; but keep them all the same, they only want a little rubbing up.”

“Oh, thank you; how pretty they are; how kind you are to me,” said Ella, sadly. “I—I—am not going.” And she burst out crying.

It was just dreadful not to go; the poor child had had a great draught of delight the day before, and she was aching and sickening for more, and longing with a passion of longing which is only known to very young people—she looked quite worn and pale through her tears.

“Rub up your shoebuckles—that will distract you,” said the old lady, kindly. “They are worth a great deal of money, though they are only paste; and if you peep in my room you will find a little pair of slippers to wear them with. I hope they will fit. I could hardly get any small enough for you.” They were the loveliest little white satin slippers, with satin heels, all embroidered with glass beads; but small as they were, they were a little loose, only Ella took care not to say so, as she tried them on.

We all know what is coming, though little Ella had no idea of it. The ball was at Guildhall, one of the grandest and gayest that ever was given in the city of London. It was in honour of the beautiful young Princess, who had just landed on our shores. Princes, ambassadors, nobles, stars, orders and garters and decorations, were to be present; all the grandest, gayest, richest, happiest people in the country, all the most beautiful ladies and jewels and flowers, were to be there to do homage to the peerless young bride. The Ashfords had no sooner started, than Lady Jane, who had been very mysterious all day, and never told any one that she had been to the city to procure two enormous golden tickets which were up in her bedroom, now came, smiling very benevolently, into the drawing-room. Little Ella was standing out in the balcony with her pale face and all her hair tumbling down her back.* She had been too busy to put

it up, and now she was only thinking of the ball, and picturing the dear little ugly disappointed face of Prince Richardson, when he should look about everywhere for her in vain—while she was standing hopelessly gazing after the receding carriage.

"Well, my dear, have you rubbed up the shoebuckles? That is right," said the old lady. "Now come quick into my room and see some of my conjuring."

Conjuring! It was the most beautiful white net dress, frothed and frothed up to the waist, and looped up with long grasses. The conjuring was her own dear old pearl necklace with the diamond clasp and a diamond star for her hair. It was a bunch of grasses and delicate white azalias for a headdress, and over all the froth a great veil of flowing white net. The child opened her violet eyes, gasped, screamed, and began dancing about the room like a mad thing, jumping, bounding, clapping her hands, all so softly and gaily, and yet so lightly, in such an ecstasy of delight, that Lady Jane felt she was more than rewarded.

* * * * *

"Ah! there she is at last!" cried Mr. Richardson, who was turning carefully round and round with the energetic Lisette.

"What do you mean?" said Lisette.

Can you fancy her amazement when she looked round and saw Ella appearing in her snow and sunlight dress, looking so beautiful that everybody turned to wonder at her, and to admire? As for Ella, she saw no one, nothing; she was looking up and down, and right and left, for the kind little pale plain face which she wanted.

"Excuse me one minute, Miss Lisette," said Mr. Richardson, leaving poor Lisette planted in the middle of the room, and rushing forward.

"Are you engaged," Ella heard a breathless voice saying in her ear, "for the next three, six, twenty dances? I am so delighted you have come! I thought you were never coming."

Julia had no partner at all, and was standing close by the entrance with her mother. They were both astounded at the apparition. Mrs. Ashford came forward to make sure that her eyes were not deceiving her. Could it be—? yes—no,—yes, it was Ella. She flicked her fan indignantly into an alderman's eye, and looked so fierce, that the child began to tremble.

"Please forgive me, mamma," said Ella, piteously.

"Forgive you! never," said Mrs. Ashford, indignant. "What does all this mean, pray?" she continued. "Lady Jane, I really must ——" and then she stopped, partly because she was so angry she could scarcely speak, and partly because she could not afford to quarrel with Lady Jane until the season was over.

"You really *must* forgive me, dear Lydia," said Lady Jane. "She wanted to come so much, I could not resist bringing her."

Weber's inspiring last waltz was being played; the people and music went waving to and fro like the waves of the sea, sudden sharp notes of exceeding sweetness sounded, and at the sound the figures all swayed in

harmony. The feet kept unseen measure to the music; the harmonious rhythm thrilled and controlled them all. The music was like an enchantment, which kept them moving and swaying in circles and in delightful subjection. Lassitude, sadness, disappointment, Ella's alarm, all melted away for the time; pulses beat, and the dancers seesawed to the measure.

All that evening young Richardson danced with Ella and with no one else: they scarcely knew how the time went. It was a fairy world: they were flying and swimming in melody—the fairy hours went by to music, in light, in delightful companionship. Ella did not care for Mrs. Ashford's darkening looks, for anything that might happen: she was so happy in the moment, she almost forgot to look for Lady Jane's sympathetic glance.

"You must meet me in the ladies' cloak-room punctually at half-past eleven," her patroness had whispered to her. "I cannot keep Raton, with his bad cough, out after twelve o'clock. Mind you are punctual, for I have promised not to keep him waiting."

"Yes, yes, dear Lady Jane," said Ella, and away she danced again to the music. And time went on, and Julia had no partners; and Colonel Ashford came up to his wife, saying,—*"I'm so glad you arranged for Ella too,"* he said. *"How nice she is looking. What is the matter with Julia; why don't she dance?"* Tumty, tumty, tumty, went the instruments. And meanwhile Mr. Richardson was saying,—*"Your dancing puts me in mind of a fairy I once saw in a field at Cliffe long ago. Nobody would ever believe me, but I did see one."*

"A fairy—what was she like?" asked Ella.

"She was very like you," said Mr. Richardson, laughing. "I do believe it *was* you, and that was the time when I saw you before."

"No, it was not," said Ella, blushing, and feeling she ought to confess. "I will tell you," she said, "if you will promise to dance *one* more dance with me, after you know.—Only one."

"Then you, too, remember," he cried, eagerly. "One more dance?—twenty—for ever and ever. Ah, you must know, you must guess the feeling in my heart. . . ."

"Listen first," said Ella, trembling very much and waltzing on very slowly. "It was only the other day——" The clock struck three-quarters.

"Ella, I am going," said Lady Jane, tapping her on the shoulder. "Come along, my dear——"

"One word!" cried Richardson, eagerly.

"You can stay with your mother if you like," the old lady went on, preoccupied—she was thinking of her coachman's ire—"but I advise you to come with me."

"Oh, pray, pray stay!" said young Richardson; "where is your mother? Let me go and ask her?"

"You had better go yourself, Ella," said old Lady Jane. "Will you give me your arm to the door, Mr. Richardson?"

Ella went up to Mrs. Ashford—she was bold with happiness to-night—

and made her request. "Stay with me? certainly not, it is quite out of the question. You do me great honour," said the lady, laughing *sarcastically*: "Lady Jane brought you, Lady Jane must take you back," said the stepmother. "Follow your chaperone if you please, I have no room for you in my brougham. Go directly, Miss!" said Mrs. Ashford, so *savagely* that the poor child was quite frightened and set off running after the other two. She would have caught them up, but at that instant Lisette—who had at last secured a partner—came waltzing up in such a violent, angry way, that she bumped right up against the little flying maiden and nearly knocked her down. Ella gave a low cry of pain: they had trodden on her foot roughly—they had wounded her; her little satin slipper had come off. Poor Ella stooped and tried to pull at the slipper, but other couples came surging up, and she was alone, and frightened, and obliged to shuffle a little way out of the crowd before she could get it on. The poor little frightened thing thought she never should get through the crowd. She made the best of her way to the cloak-room: it seemed to her as if she had been hours getting there. At last she reached it, only to see, to her dismay, as she went in at one door the other two going out of another a long way off! She called, but they did not hear her, and at the same moment St. Paul's great clock began slowly to strike twelve. "My cloak, my cloak, anything, please," she cried in great agitation and anxiety; and a stupid, bewildered maid hastily threw a shabby old shawl over her shoulders—it belonged to some assistant in the place. Little Ella, more and more frightened, pulled it up as she hurried along the blocked passages and corridors all lined with red and thronged with people. They all stared at her in surprise as she flew along. Presently her net tunic caught in a doorway and tore into a long ragged shred which trailed after her. In her agitation her comb fell out of her hair—she looked all scared and frightened—nobody would have recognized the beautiful triumphal princess of half an hour before. She heard the linkmen calling, "Peppercorne's carriage stops the way!" and she hurried faster and faster down the endless passages and steps, and at last, just as she got to the doorway—O horror! she saw the carriage and outriders going gleaming off in the moonlight, while every thing else looked black, dark, and terrible.

"Stop, stop, please stop!" cried little Ella, rushing out into the street through the amazed footmen and linkmen. "Stop! stop!" she cried, flying past Richardson himself, who could hardly believe his eyes. Raton only whipped his horses, and Ella saw them disappearing into gloom in the distance in a sort of agony of despair. She was excited beyond measure, and exaggerated all her feelings. What was to be done? Go back?—that was impossible; walk home?—she did not know her way. Was it fancy?—was not somebody following her? She felt quite desperate in the moonlight and darkness. At that instant it seemed to her like a fairy chariot coming to her rescue, when a cabman, who was slowly passing, stopped and said, "Cab, mum?"

"Yes! oh, yes! To Onslow Square," cried Ella, jumping in and shutting the door in delight and relief. She drove off just as the bewildered little Richardson, who had followed her, reached the spot. He came up in time only to see the cab drive off, and to pick up something which was lying shining on the pavement. It was one of the diamond buckles which had fallen from her shoe as she jumped in. This little diamond buckle might, perhaps, have led to her identification if young Richardson had not taken the precaution of ascertaining from old Lady Jane, Ella's name and address.

He sent a servant next morning with a little parcel and a note to inquire whether one of the ladies had lost what was enclosed, and whether Colonel Ashford would see him at one o'clock on business.

"Dear me, what a pretty little buckle!" said Lisette, trying it on her large flat foot. "It looks very nice, don't it, Julia? I think I guess—don't you?—what he is coming for? I shall say 'No.'"

"It's too small for you. It would do better for me," said Julia, contemplating her own long slipper, embellished with the diamonds. "It is not ours. We must send it back, I suppose."

"A shoebuckle," said Ella, coming in from the kitchen, where she had been superintending preserves in her little brown frock. "Let me see it. Oh, how glad I am; it is mine. Look here!" and she pulled the fellow out of her pocket. "Lady Jane gave them to me."

And so the prince arrived before luncheon, and was closeted with Colonel Ashford, who gladly gave his consent to what he wanted. And when Mrs. Ashford began to explain things to him, as was her way, he did not listen to a single word she said. He was so absorbed wondering when Ella was coming into the room. He thought once he heard a little rustle on the stairs outside, and he jumped up and rushed to the door. It was Ella, sure enough, in her shabby little gown. Then he knew where and when he had seen her before.

"Ella, why did you run away from me last night?" he said. "You see I have followed you after all."

They were so good, so happy, so devoted to one another, that even Lisette and Julia relented. Dear little couple; good luck go with them, happiness, content, and plenty. There was something quite touching in their youth, tenderness, and simplicity, and as they drove off in their carriage for the honeymoon, Lady Jane flung the very identical satin slipper after them which Ella should have lost at the ball.

The National Portrait Exhibition.

THE object of the present paper is that it may serve as a familiar guide or companion to the fine Exhibition of National Portraits now on view at South Kensington. There is, of course, a catalogue of those portraits; and considering the range and difficulty of the subject, it is very creditably executed. But they are 1,030 in number to begin with, which confines the compilers of the catalogue within the narrowest possible limits. And, in the second place, the exhibition is of a nature too peculiar to be a proper subject for ordinary catalogue treatment. The mass of the pictures composing it are not interesting as works of art, but as illustrations of history; and their interest varies so prodigiously in degree on this account, that some deserve as many pages as others do lines of commentary. Our duty would therefore seem to be to *select* from the whole body those works which are most worthy a visitor's attention; indicating great artistic merit where it is generally allowed to exist by experts in those matters; but mainly remembering that portraiture is a kind of biography, and that the people here portrayed have, on the whole, been the leaders of English life, and ought to be remembered with some familiarity. But before beginning the task as thus conceived by us, a few words must be given to the history of the undertaking. The suggestion of it came from the Earl of Derby, whose powerful influence has mainly contributed to its success; and the collection has been formed under the superintendence of Mr. Samuel Redgrave, by Mr. Soden Smith, the Rev. James Beck, and Mr. R. F. Sketchley, who has acted as secretary. Most of the great houses of England, from Windsor downwards, such as Althorp, Longleat, Knowsley, Chatsworth, &c., have furnished portraits, and their example has been followed by colleges, corporations, and the halls of country squires. In fact, there has been a good creaming of our English portrait galleries; not a final one, for more yet remains, and must be made use of next year; but still one which gives a fair representation of our English portraits down to 1688. Next year, those of later dates come on. But it is also intended, we are glad to learn, that a second creaming shall take place, before then, of the earlier times; and now that the country is getting widely informed about the whole affair, treasures will come to light the existence of which is hardly yet suspected. Only the other day we learned by accident that an old Yorkshire family possesses a complete or nearly complete series of the famous Whartons down to the eccentric duke, immortalized by Pope, who died at Tarragona in 1731. But their possessor, it seems, never knew that any such project as that of the Exhibition was in the wind. The search for

future materials must be more minute than it has been hitherto; and it would be well if those who have old portraits of any kind in their possession would put themselves in communication with the South Kensington authorities.

After this brief preamble, let us commence our ciceroneship by advising the reader to do his work chronologically. For this purpose, he ascends the stairs instead of entering the gallery immediately before him, and finds himself in the Eastern Corridor amongst the old potentates of the Plantagenet reigns. Portraiture, he sees at once, is a thing of comparatively modern date in England. There are only a few portraits of very ancient times, and of these, some are trashy fictions, many are of artificial origin, and nearly all are of uncertain date and authorship. The first class is represented by a "Rosamond Clifford" (No. 1), purely imaginary; and by a "Sir William Wallace" (No. 2), in a tartan scarf, evidently drawn from some Argyleshire cattle-lifter under sentence of death at Glasgow about the period of the Union. There is a significance in *this* imposture which illustrates the whole subject of portrait-manufacture. To put Wallace in tartan could only have been an idea originating in modern times. He was a Lowland gentleman of English descent, his name "Waleys" being one which occurs among English barons and lord mayors of his century, and which first appears in the chartulary of Paisley along with the founders of the house of Stewart whom the Waleyses evidently accompanied to Renfrewshire from Shropshire. But there is a fictitious portraiture which belongs to art, as well as a fictitious portraiture which only belongs to fable. During the middle ages, our herald-painters and illuminators of MSS. were in the habit of making representations of their heroes or patrons; and the effigies on tombs and church-windows were certainly intended to be likenesses as much as the heads on classical or on modern coins. When these came to be used during the revival of art, as models from which to make larger portraits, the result was a portraiture—often quaint enough indeed—but by no means contemptible or untrustworthy. Chaucer was painted in miniature in old MSS.; and down to the last century a picture of him was visible on his tomb at Westminster. If, then, the two "Chaucers" in the Exhibition (Nos. 8 and 9) are not taken from life, as is certain enough, there is no reason to doubt their being like life. And they both represent the poet as a man of sensibility and intellect, though with all the gravity of expression which belongs to early schools of art. The author of the *Canterbury Tales* was a humourist as decidedly as a poet; but the power of giving the familiar, comic, or everyday view of a face belongs to the later ages of art rather than to the first ones. The "Henry IV." (No. 18, compare No. 10) remained long at Hampton Court, Herefordshire, which was built by a knight in Henry's service, who married a Fitzalan related to the king. It has thus an excellent pedigree, and was no doubt copied in large from a miniature illumination. The "John Talbot, first Earl of Shrewsbury" (No. 19), makes

the old warrior, who is in a tabard, look like a playing-card. This portrait, which is in oil upon panel, was discovered by Pennant at Canons-Ashby, the seat of Lord Northampton, whose descendant, the Marquis, has lent it to the Exhibition. It is of the age of Henry VI., and a duplicate of it, which used to hang near the earl's tomb in old St. Paul's, was brought to the Herald's College after the fire of London. The tabard recalls a fine scene which old writers tell us took place when—

that great Alcides of the field,
Valiant John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury,

lay dead upon the field of Chastillon. His herald found the body of the aged fighting-man,—he was eighty years old, and had been victorious in forty pitched battles and skirmishes,—and kissing it, broke out into “these compassionate and dutiful expressions,”—“Alas, it is you! I pray God pardon all your misdoings. I have been your officer of arms forty years or more, 'tis time I should surrender it to you.” And, “while the tears trickled plentifully down his face,” goes on the account, “he disrobed himself of his coat-of-arms, and flung it over his master's body.” Another portrait taken from life in this antique second-hand way is that of “Sir Thomas Lyttelton” (No. 36), Lord Lyttelton's ancestor, which was evidently done some generations after the famous old judge's time, probably from portraits in the windows of Frankley or Halesowen churches. The “Jane Shores” (Nos. 33, 34, 35,) disappoint one as far as beauty is concerned. But the Eton College portrait (No. 34) deserves attention on the ground pointed out by Horace Walpole,—that her confessor was provost of Eton, and received through her intercession some lands of which the college had been despoiled. The pictures thus specified are all good, or, at lowest, curious samples of the old feudal *retrospective* portraiture, as we may call it. But there are two works in the Eastern Corridor of greater authority and higher merit than any of them. These are “Edward Grimston” (No. 17) and “Sir John Donne and Lady Donne” (No. 18). The first is a portrait by Petrus Christus, a pupil of Van Eyck, of an ancestor of Lord Verulam's, who was employed in the Low Countries in the fifteenth century. It is executed with the greatest power and truthfulness, and has the additional and unique interest, as far as we can see, of being the earliest portrait directly from life, on that scale, in the whole Exhibition. This is the more remarkable because very little is known about the Grimston family to the world at large, by whom they have been chiefly heard of as holding the title and possessing the estate once belonging to Bacon. The “Sir John and Lady Donne” is a noble religious picture by Van Eyck, in which the knight and his lady are kneeling before the Virgin and Child. Such pictures were presented by men of influence to religious houses in the middle ages, and the introduction into them of the patrons was a kind of return for their generosity. This one has the true realism and deep thoughtful sentiment of the old Christian schools. Like the “Edward Grimston,” its interest

is entirely different from that of the vast majority of the works in the Exhibition. Its interest is wholly in the painter, and not in the subject; whereas most of the portraits are valuable for the subject; and only a few are at once great in subject and in execution.

On leaving the Eastern Corridor, we find ourselves in the Eastern Gallery, which looks pleasantly out on the Horticultural Gardens, and is divided into nine bays or compartments, devoted to the men and women of the Tudor reigns. Almost the first portrait that meets the eye here—that of “Thomas Stanley, first Earl of Derby” (No. 42)—suggests the uncertainty of all early works of the kind. Not only is the costume that of a later date, but the earl himself is the “double” of a Duke of Somerset of Elizabeth’s reign, who figures elsewhere in the collection (No. 386). Nay more, his son, Lord Strange (No. 69), and his grandson, the second earl (No. 70), have a similar look of manufacture about them. This remark does not apply to the illustrious second wife of the first earl—Margaret Beaufort, Countess of Richmond and Derby—a connection, by the way, which makes a certain confusion between Stanley and Beaufort portraits in some degree intelligible. Lord Derby’s portrait of that lady (No. 48) essentially resembles the one sent by St. John’s College, Cambridge (No. 47), of which she was a foundress. Near her hangs “Edward Stafford, third Duke of Buckingham” (No. 44, and see No. 71). This is the Buckingham of Shakspeare’s *Henry VIII.*, who says of Wolsey,—

This butcher’s cur is venom-mouth’d, and I
Have not the power to muzzle him;

and whose death on the scaffold was an incident in that war between the old nobility and the new, which is a salient feature of our aristocratic history under the Tudors. His daughter Elizabeth married the third Duke of Norfolk—by whom she was infamously treated—and was the mother of the illustrious Earl of Surrey—the flower of the house of Howard—of whose undutifulness, we regret to say, she made heavy complaints. But we are giving the nobles precedence over the sovereigns, which will never do. Let us observe first, then, that of all the Henry VIII.’s,—burly, florid, vigorous, and *tant soit peu* brutal as they are,—the best is No. 99, from Warwick Castle. Let us next call attention to the fine picture of “Henry VII. and Ferdinand of Arragon” (No. 54), and to the exquisite Mabuse, called (it is thought erroneously) “The Children of Henry VII.” (No. 58), but which, under any other name, would be equally a rose of art. There is also a fine comely full-length of “Margaret Tudor, Queen of Scotland” (No. 58), whose marriage with James IV. of that kingdom ultimately brought the English crown to the Stuarts; who was at once a grandmother of Mary and of Darnley; and who is the link which connects her Majesty with all the older sovereigns of England. Queen Margaret’s sister, the Princess Mary, is also represented (Nos. 76 and 80), with her pleasant, jolly-looking husband, “Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk,” whom Henry evidently

pardoned all the more readily because he recognized in his handsomeness, his animalism, and his high spirit, a nature kindred to his own.

The presiding genius of this part of the exhibition is the great Hans Holbein—the Swiss whose genius, like the Rhine, took its rise among the Alps and flowed northwards—the friend of Erasmus and Sir Thomas More, one of the earliest, truest, wisest, and most finished of all portrait-painters. Recent investigation has shown that Holbein died sooner than used to be thought, and this has thrown doubt on several portraits formerly honoured by bearing his name. But there are enough unquestioned specimens of him at South Kensington to give the visitor a thorough taste of his genius. We may instance, particularly, the “Sir William Butts” (No. 110) and “Lady Butts” (No. 115). Butts, who was physician to Henry the Eighth, has had the curious luck of being immortalized at once by Holbein and by Shakspeare :

By holy Mary, Butts, there's knavery,

says Shakspeare's Henry when Butts shows him from the window Craumer kept waiting among lackies outside the Council Chamber by the Lords of Council. Holbein, however, has done the wife even better than the husband, or the picture has been luckier in its history ; for a more characteristic human head was hardly ever put upon canvas. The “Sir Richard Southwells,” also (Nos. 108 and 112) are very good, and make one think of the man who accused Surrey of treason, and whom Surrey offered to fight “in his shirt.” Still more interesting, because the painter's genius is employed on a higher man, is Holbein's “William Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury” (No. 86), a fine, honest, tender old face, rugged but gentle, alive with intellectual light, and soft with moral patience. Warham held Canterbury immediately before Cranmer, and was one of the Conservative Reformers, like Erasmus and More, who hoped that the Church might be improved, chiefly through literature, without disruption of its unity and without social convulsion. Of hardly any man does the great and delightful Sage of Rotterdam speak with heartier warmth than of Warham. And we are now in the thick of Erasmus's friends. We have not, indeed, reached as yet the More family, one of the glories of the whole Exhibition. There is, however, an excellent “Linacre” (No. 96), attributed either to Holbein or Quintin Matsys, and an inferior Dean Colet (No. 60), which makes no such pretensions. The poet Sir Thomas Wyatt, Surrey's friend, one of the many men of that age who combined the pursuit of letters with active life, certainly sat to Holbein, as his contemporary, the antiquary Leland, affirms. But the painter's hand is not visible in the poet's head as we have it from the Bodleian (No. 68), though on the whole we prefer the Bodleian Wyatt to the one sent by Mr. John Bruce (No. 98). The family portraits of our great families begin to be authentic as the sixteenth century advances, though the artists are often unknown. The “Sir William Cavendish” (No. 81) of this epoch is significantly like the shrewd perceiving loyal Gentleman—

Usher of Wolsey, the real founder of the House of Devonshire. His fidelity to Wolsey served him with the King after Wolsey's fall. Priories and abbeys were "dissolved" into a stream of wealth for him and his posterity. And he married, for his third wife, a widow fair and rich, and still cleverer than she was fair and rich,—the notorious Elizabeth Hardwick, commonly called "Bess of Hardwick"—an alliance which first planted the Cavendishes in Derbyshire. Other characteristic faces of the founders of our modern aristocracy are those of "Sir William Petre" (No. 128), with his sagacious look and firm mouth; of "William, first Lord Paget" (No. 159), long-nosed, and acute; of "Sir John Thynne" (No. 161), the steward of the Protector Somerset, sharp, pushing, and bold. On all these men, and such as they, the Seymours included, "the gentle Surrey," as Sir Walter Scott calls him, looked with distrust and hauteur. And this feeling of Surrey's, expressed in such sayings as that "they loved no ancient nobility," and that "when the King died they should smart for it," did no little towards bringing that brilliant head of his to the block. There are three portraits of the Earl of Surrey in the Exhibition, of which far the most striking is the brilliant full-length contributed by the Countess Delawarr (No. 121), and which, if it had no other claim than the having come down from the Sackvilles, who were related to Surrey's family, would be of great importance. But its splendid qualities as a picture attract every artist, and it is difficult to gaze on the stately figure, and the sad, proud, intellectual look of the face, without feeling that so once stood before his contemporaries the most famous of the Howards in the sixteenth century. He leans against a column bearing a motto which he had chosen, *sat superest*, and to his right is the shield of his ancestor Thomas Plantagenet of Brotherton, the carrying of which was one of the offences that cost him his head. This fine portrait is ascribed to Holbein. But it seems more likely to be the work of Guillim Street, though even this is doubtful, and there are authorities who think it due to some painter of Italy. The chronology in this, as in other cases, does not suit the Holbein theory. For instance, "Edward Stanley, third Earl of Derby" (No. 153), is called a Holbein likewise. But if Holbein died in 1543, as now seems certain, that Lord Derby was many years younger at the time than the portrait makes him. One portrait good enough to be classed with genuine Holbeins, though the head has been tampered with, is "Sir William Sidney" (No. 141), the grandfather of Sir Philip. This fine amiable-looking gentleman leads off the Sidneys in the Exhibition, of whom there are no less than thirteen. The family likeness is curiously visible in many of them, and a pleasant type of face it is, always benignant, intellectual, and refined.

Of all the pictures, however, bearing the name of Holbein, that which carries off the palm in the multitude of associations,—historic, domestic, literary,—gathering round it, is the "Sir Thomas More and his Family" (No. 163), belonging to Mr. Charles Winn, of Yorkshire. That Holbein painted a family group of the Mores is certain; for we have two letters

of Erasmus still extant in which he mentions having seen a picture of the kind. In the first of these, dated Friburg, 5th September, 1529, Erasmus says to Sir Thomas :—"I hope it may be allowed me yet once in life to see those most dear friends, whom in the picture which Holbein showed me I have looked at with the greatest pleasure of mind." In the second, written next day, and addressed to Sir Thomas's daughter, Mrs. Margaret Roper, he dwells on the work at greater length :—"I can hardly tell you," the old scholar writes, "what pleasure I felt when the painter, Holbein, showed me that whole family so happily brought out, that if I had been present I could not have seen much more. Frequently am I wont to desire that once before my fatal day, it may be my lot to see that most dear company to which I owe a good part, whether of my fortune or my glory such as it is, and owe to no mortals more willingly. Of this wish, the ingenious hand of the painter has given me no little portion. I recognized them all, but no one more readily than you. I seemed to myself to see shining through its most beautiful dwelling the much more beautiful mind." And he adds that he had kissed the image of Margaret Roper's mother. Now, that the portrait here spoken of was such a portrait of the whole household as the one before us in the Exhibition, is abundantly plain from Erasmus's words. They are all there,—grandfather, father, son, daughters ; and Margaret Roper is comely enough to justify the good old scholar's compliments. The household clock is ticking on the wall ; the family fool is standing in the background ; flowers from the garden perfume the air ; and the whole atmosphere is redolent of homely domestic life and peace. But how much of the work as it at present stands came from the hand of Holbein is not easy to determine. Walpole thought that he made the design, and that it was executed in large by journeymen ; and he enumerated six pieces extant on the subject, one of the three largest of which is the one of which we are speaking. Certain it is, that Mr. Winn's picture has pedigree in its favour, for it can be traced to the Ropers already mentioned, one of whom Margaret More married. Its *general* authenticity is thus indisputable ; and if we miss Holbein in the details, we are sure that his genius is there as the animating spirit of the whole.

As we approach the period of the Elizabethans, a few admirable portraits by the great painter Sir Antonio More, who came to England with Philip the Second, present themselves for particular study. Such are his portrait of himself (No. 186), a noble work ; and that of "Walter Devereux, first Earl of Essex" (No. 263), whose keen wise eye and arch expression have an irresistible look of life. This able and long-descended nobleman was one of the seven men whom Elizabeth made peers in her fifty years' reign. It is believed that he was poisoned at the instigation of Leicester, who married his widow, Lettice Knollys. He was the father of Elizabeth's favourite, in whose face a family likeness is discernible (No. 253). But it is a pity that we have no portraits either of his wife Lettice, or of his daughter Penelope, whose beauty was renowned.

Another highly remarkable work by Sir Antonio More is "Queen Elizabeth as Princess" (No. 271). This is exquisitely painted, and represents the Queen as a young woman, eminently intelligent, and by no means bad-looking. Few of our readers are probably so confident that Elizabeth was beautiful as Mr. Kingsley. But the general impression to the contrary which somehow prevails now, receives no confirmation from the many portraits of her in this Exhibition, taken in the lump. Whether as a girl with a book in her hand in the very fine picture (it has been severely scrubbed by the way) from St. James's Palace (No. 247); or in early womanhood as More presents her; or blazing in gems, from the brilliant pencil of Zuccherò (No. 267), in middle life, she cannot fairly be called plain, and her face has always intellect and character. What is noticeable, too, is that through all Elizabeth's portraits there is a general similarity of type visible; whereas most of those of Mary Queen of Scots are neither like each other, nor like anything that the sixteenth century writers tell us about her. In scarcely two out of thirteen, do we see the *belle créature* of Joseph Scaliger; the

Nympha inter pulchras pulcherrima Neptuninas,
Nympha Caledoniæ gloria magna tuæ,

of George Buchanan; or her whom Ronsard sang of as,—

Une Boyne si belle,
Belle en perfection : car toute la beauté
Qui est, et qui sera, et a jamais esté
Pres de la sienne est jalde.

The great men of Elizabeth's great reign are fairly represented in the Eastern Gallery. The sagacious Cecil and his son are there (Nos. 242, 245, 259). Sir Nicholas Bacon's solid brow and powerful jaw suggest a man equally great at the council-board and the dinner-table (No. 228). No quite worthy Raleigh appears, indeed, but there is a far-travelled penetrating look about one portrait of him (No. 250), which induces us to give it the preference. "Thomas Sackville, Earl of Dorset," best known in literature as Lord Buckhurst, and ancestor of many Sackvilles distinguished in their times, figures to advantage on the canvas of Garrard (No. 255). The Admiralty, too, have sent an impressive full length of that fine old grandee, Charles Howard Earl of Nottingham, the conqueror of the Armada (No. 357). For some reason or other, however, the sailors of this age have not received justice at the hands of its artists. Neither Drake (Nos. 346, 361) nor Frobiisher (Nos. 351, 395) satisfy the imagination. How cheerfully would we exchange for really great portraits of such men, the criminals like Leicester, who seem to have been painted on all hands, or the obscure big-wigs who were painted only because they had money to pay for it, and whose names, read in a catalogue one day, are forgotten the next! Of the many kinds of moral interest about a portrait gallery—especially a portrait gallery of a nation, as this one at Kensington is—not the

least is the tone of irony visible in the way in which fortune arranges whose portraits shall survive. It runs through all departments of life. There are more Cecils, Grimstones, and Wallops, than Talbots, Cliffords, and Veres. The grave-digger who dug Mary Queen of Scots' grave is there,—and nobody can answer for the likenesses of Shakspeare. The only portrait of Edmund Spenser (No. 336) is without a history. The only two of Ben Jonson (Nos. 332, 333) are hardly like each other. And we look in vain on the walls for Marlow, Kyd, Webster, Peele, or Nash.

We must not, however, grudge the Elizabethan "swell" his comparative prosperity, because he was nearly always a "swell," and something more. He was a lily of the valley, but he knew how to toil and spin. Sometimes, like "George Clifford, third Earl of Cumberland" (No. 397), he made long sea-voyages for England's glory at his own expense. Sometimes, like Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford (whom we regret to find absent), he wrote poems which the world has not allowed to die. He fought with Sidney at Zutphen; with Devereux at Cadiz; and poured out—freely as the wine flowed in his castle—his old blood on the American sand. A certain elevation of sentiment marks these men, which even the cavaliers did not possess in the same delicacy of bloom, and which was totally wanting to the witty rakes of the Second Charles. "Fulke Greville, first Lord Brooke" (No. 299,) wrote himself down in his epitaph, to be read to this day under his rotting banner in the church of St. Mary at Warwick,—

Servant to Queen Elizabeth,
Counsellor to King James,
And friend to Sir Philip Sydney,

his life of whom is still worth reading. And Philip himself is probably looked at in the various excellent portraits of him which the Exhibition contains, with as genial an admiration as any man under its roof. Our own favourite is the Warwick Castle Sidney (No. 274), which has come down to Lord Brooke from the biographer just mentioned. Near it hangs his loved and honoured sister (No. 284), on whom Ben Jonson wrote the famous lines which Simonides never surpassed, and which, quoted a thousand times, shall here be quoted for the thousandth and first:—

Underneath this sable hearse,
Lies the subject of all verse,
Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother,
Death, ere thou hast slain another
Learn'd, and fair, and good as she,
Time shall throw a dart at thee.

It is customary to speak of this sweet little poem as an "epitaph," and the catalogue, following this custom, adds truly that it was never engraved on Lady Pembroke's monument. But the truth is that it is not an epitaph,

but an *epicedion*;—not an inscription for a tomb, but a dirge, or funeral-song, for a funeral. The popular misquotation "*marble hearse*" has done much to keep up the popular error on the subject. Assuredly, the beauties of that generation never were without a *vates sacer*. Not far from "Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke," is the pleasant good-natured face of "Alice Spencer, Countess of Derby" (No. 288), who, celebrated in her youth by the poet Spenser as "*sweet Amaryllis*," had a mask—the "*Arcades*"—dedicated to her in her old age by Milton. She was the wife of "Ferdinando, fifth Earl of Derby" (Nos. 286, 289), whose portraits—not otherwise remarkable—have a decided air of reality about them. That of his father, "Henry, the fourth Earl of Derby" (No. 287), gives a capital notion of the higher patricians of that day, whose position was always a responsible, and often a perilous one. But the Exhibition does not contain a single head of the Stanleys from whom the present Earl of Derby descends—the junior branch who succeeded to the earldom in 1736—and we cannot expect to trace vivid resemblances between living men and the faces of those from whose fourth cousins they are sixth or seventh in descent. Other members of houses now patrician, worth looking at in this far end of the Eastern Gallery, are "Sir John Spencer" (No. 371), father of the first peer; and (in the Eastern Corridor) "Sir Oliver Wullop" (No. 385), Lord Portsmouth's ancestor—a good, round-headed fighting man, with no lack of character about him.

On leaving the East Central Corridor at the end of what may be called the Tudor Gallery, we ascend the stairs, and passing through the Naval Museum, come to a large square space—the Centre—in which the reign of James the First begins. Before we enter it, three portraits face us. That in the middle—the tall figure in black doublet and hose—is Lord William Howard, the "*Belted Will*" of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*:—

His Bilboa blade, by Marchmen felt,
Hung in a broad and studded belt;
Hence, in rude phrase, the borderers still
Called Noble Howard, Belted Will.

He was a younger son of Thomas, the fourth Duke of Norfolk (No. 268), who lost his head for his foolish political flirtation with Mary Queen of Scots, in 1572; and was thus a grandson of the "*gentle Surrey*," the common ancestor of all the great Howards—except the Effingham line who came off earlier—down to this day. "*Belted Will*" founded the Carlisle branch, endowing them with broad lands by his marriage with Elizabeth a co-heiress of the last Lord Dacre of Gillesland. The three heiresses of that great northern house all married Howards; and the male line of Dacre, reduced to poverty, and meeting no justice, died unhappy, some in exile, and some at home. Of course, there are no Dacres in the Exhibition, "*Elizabeth Lady Howard*" excepted (No. 429). On either side of the old Border chieftain hang a married couple whose history is

a romance. These are "Sir Robert Shirley" (No. 404), and "Lady Theresa," his wife (No. 406). Sir Robert was one of those adventurous travellers whose lives give so much of its picturesque colour to the age of Elizabeth. He was employed in Persia by the Shah, and brought home to the court of James the Persian lady—

Serene with argent-lidded eyes
Amorous—

whose pretty face is before us. In the Centre, round the corner, the first head which strikes the view is that of an old gentlewoman, and it is called "The Countess of Desmond," by Rembrandt. We all remember this Countess—

Who lived to the age of a hundred and ten,
And died by a fall from a cherry-tree, then;
What a frisky old girl!—

as Tom Moore sings. But this cannot be the old girl in question, or if it is, then it cannot be a Rembrandt. A very brilliant figure next attracts attention, "Sir Nathaniel Bacon," by himself (No. 411). He was the great Bacon's half-brother, and was an amateur of real genius for the art. He painted his wife, also, who is beside him (No. 415), and the work is a very clever one. Two portraits of Arabella Stuart are on the same wall, one of them (No. 422) probably—as Miss Cooper suggests,*—that which was sent to Leicester when he wished to betroth the child whom he lost—the infant Lord Denbigh—to the child Arabella. The "Swinburne" in the corner (No. 426) was an ancestor of the young poet who is again making the old name familiar. But the leading figures of the Centre are King James, his family, and some of his court. James is here, as everywhere, intelligent-looking, but ignoble;—no sovereign and no gentleman;—reminding one much of Thackeray's saying in the *Book of Snobs* that he was "a snob and a Scotch snob—than which the world contains no more offensive creature." But the personal appearance of Prince Henry, the "Marcellus of the House of Stuart,"—

Ostendent terris hunc tantum fata, neque ultra
Easo sinent—

is not unworthy a prince whose parts attracted Bacon, and his character, Raleigh. In Bacon's Latin eulogium, Henry's personal beauty is strongly insisted upon, and compared to that of his sister Elizabeth, whom he resembles, Bacon says, as much as a young man could resemble the conspicuous beauty of a virgin; "quam etiam, quantum potuit virilis forma ad eximiam virginealem pulchritudinem collata, referebat." He looks best, we think, in the Van Somer (No. 446), sent by Lord Craven, whose ancestor was in such close relations with Elizabeth of Bohemia. The "Queen of Hearts" is always stately and handsome

* In her recent excellent and agreeable *Life of Arabella Stuart*.—(Hunt and Blackett.)

(No. 445). And handsomeness must also be assigned—it is his only good point—to George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, of whom and his family there are beautiful pictures by Jansen and Honthorst (Nos. 432, 435). The favourites of Elizabeth had generally something about them besides good looks, even when, like Leicester, they were tainted with crime. Besides, if her favourites were foolish, her councillors were wise. But the creatures whom James raised out of the dust to the height of greatness—from motives as little respectable as those which made a Roman emperor love a handsome *libertus*—were allowed to dishonour by their folly the country which they robbed in their greed, and were, besides, insolent and licentious beyond all historical example. It is a relief to turn from them to the stout Roundheads and the gallant Cavaliers, the men of Clarendon and Vandyck. For what Holbein is to Erasmus, Vandyck is to Clarendon. The painter illustrates the writer, and the writer illustrates the painter. It was no mere fancy of Walpole's, but a solid and valuable observation that he made, when he compared the portraits of these two great men. They had both in a singular degree the power of bringing out individual character, and exhibiting it under its most noble and graceful aspects. Of Clarendon's politics we say nothing. But it will not be the worst result of the Portrait Exhibition if it induces people to read him a little more than has been the fashion lately; and to enjoy the charm of his stateliness, relieved by familiarity; his pomp, qualified by grace. He is the counterpart of Vandyck in a sister art; and just as among the Tudors we think of Erasmus when we look at Holbein, so we think of Clarendon when we look at Vandyck.

We first get into the Vandyck region on arriving at the West Central Corridor, which we reach by descending the stairs after quitting the Centre. Here, two excellent Vandycks immediately attract attention, that of the loyal and honourable "William, first Earl of Craven" (No. 460), and that of "Thomas, first Lord Arundell of Wardour" (No. 465), a good Continental soldier of the period, whom one immediately begins to think of as if one had *known* this portrait to be like. Here we pass into another gallery, the Western Gallery, and find ourselves among some of the ablest men of the early part of the seventeenth century. There is a good full-length of Bacon from Gorhambury (No. 468), but it is the Bacon of the world and the court rather than the Bacon of philosophy or letters, and is less pleasing than the fine statue of the sage in St. Michael's Church, St. Alban's; the face is cunning, and what the Scotch call "pawky," more than wise; and we miss in it the poetic element which flashes through all the philosopher's speculations, and which has such a mournful beauty in some of the opening sentences of his will. A "Lady Hobart" (No. 469), close by, is a fine earnest old lady's head of the period, and nobody will be disappointed either with Camden (Nos. 473, 490), or Wotton, for the face of the old diplomatist and poet is full of light (No. 496). The Earl of Pembroke who married "Sidney's sister,"

is in this part of the building (No. 492,) separated from the sweet-faced lady whose name keeps him alive, and throws over him a poetry that he does not deserve—for his divorce of his first wife Katherine Grey was base, and we suspect that what his family saw to admire in Mary Sidney was less her personal worth than her Dudley connection. A lady not unlike Mary Sidney in some points of character is represented by a delightful portrait in this quarter—the Lucy Harington (No. 507), whom Ben Jonson addresses as—

Lucy, you brightness of our sphere, who are
Life of the Muses' days, their morning star

And another who made herself a name in the memoirs of the time stands with a quiet grace before us—Anne Clifford, the heiress of the Earls of Cumberland, one of whose husbands was Mary Sidney's son. It is a curious fact, however, that the women of England are worse represented in this collection than the men; and Anne Clifford, maugre her great descent, is insipid compared with such cavaliers as Vandyck's Earl of Cleveland (No. 542), and that burly old warrior, in yellow buff, Berkeley of Stratton (No. 546), whom we never look at without feeling that he must have emptied a flagon at some time or other with Dugald Dalgetty. Another almost typical cavalier—every inch a king and church man—is Sir Bevil Granville (No. 563),—he who fell at Lansdown, and was so much loved through all the west country. It is strange to see these old worthies looking at us tranquilly, side by side with those whom they never met in life, except as mortal foes; and to turn from them to their enemies, the long-headed Lord Saye and Sele (No. 551), and the resolute bright-witted John Pym, one portrait of whom, Lord Townshend's (No. 609), we think thoroughly characteristic. If, in a general way, however, the men have the advantage over the women in these galleries, there are some brilliant female portraits, and in the neighbourhood where we now are that of Charlotte de la Tremouille (No. 554) is worthy of particular attention. It is a charming Rubens, full of life and spirit and grace. The young French patrician lady is still in her own land,—the siege of Latham and that darker scene at Bolton lie hid from her in the distant future,—and the sense and resolution which great trials are doomed to evoke, only appear as yet in the form of a happy, joyous, girlish force, suggestive of love and wit and song and dancing. The reader will find it interesting to compare this delightful Rubens of Charlotte de la Tremouille, when young, with the Vandyck which depicts her as the grave, matronly Countess of Derby (No. 694), and with a third picture (No. 696), in which she is in mourning for the honest lord,—true to her and to his king,—who died so bravely and yet so modestly on the scaffold. This is the Countess of Derby whom everybody remembers in *Peveril of the Peak*, and whose family,—one of the noblest in France, and sprung from the old sovereign counts of Poitou,—is still in existence.

In some degree this Rubens of "Lady Derby" will be a surprise, since the countess, though famous for her courage and sense, was never

much celebrated as a beauty. But the fair Venetia Digby, the wife of Sir Kenelm, a Stanley by birth, was as renowned in the generation with which we are now occupied as Penelope Devereux in the generation immediately preceding. Sir Kenelm was almost inordinately proud of her loveliness, and was most anxious through life to have it secured by art, for the admiration of posterity. Accordingly, we see her in the Exhibition, both living and dead. The picture of her after death (No. 570), represents her as if asleep; and we know from Ben Jonson's poem, that her being found dead in bed excited the imagination of her admirers—

Dare I profane, so irreligious be
To greet or grieve her soft euthanasie,
So sweetly taken to the court of blisse,
As spirits had stolen her spirit in a kisse,
From off her pillow and deluded bed,
And left her lovely body unthought dead.

It is always pleasant to find the fine arts playing into each other's hands in this way; and of many instances of the kind in the Portrait Exhibition, not the least remarkable is afforded by this notable race of Digbys. The portliness and amplitude of Sir Kenelm (Nos. 575, 646) are hardly more impressive, even on the canvas of Vandyck, than in the verse of Jonson, who refers very distinctly to them—

In him all virtue is beheld in state;
And he is built like some imperial room,
For that to dwell in and be still at home.

The "imperial" size of the "room" is unmistakable, indeed, in No. 575; and one is tempted to think that it was a dining-room! The Lady Venetia is comely enough in the family group portraits, where her two little boys are delightfully done (No. 575). But her renowned loveliness is most visible in the allegorical picture of her (No. 653), where Cupids are holding a wreath of laurel over her head, and where her beauty is seen to have been of a fine type—not that of Rosalind and Amaryllis, but that of Beatrice and Portia. While on this chapter of seventeenth-century beauties, let us point out, as pretty and engaging, two ladies of families which made a great figure at that time. One is "Anne, Countess of Morton" (No. 571), who has all the voluptuous charms for which the Villierses were remarkable, and which came to their peculiar perfection in the "Duchess of Cleveland" of Lely (No. 851). The other is "Lady Dorothy Sidney, Countess of Sunderland," the "Sacharissa" of Waller, whose good looks are testified to by four portraits (Nos. 576, 662, 684, 773), though most people think them below her fame. There is a good Waller (No. 660) among the excellent pictures contributed by Mr. Fountaine, of Norfolk; but the Rousham Waller, it seems, could not be obtained. Beauties and wits go naturally together, so we may here say that, besides a good Waller, the Exhibition contains an agreeable Suckling (No. 682), and a remarkable Cowley (No. 757). We miss,

however, Cleiveland, who had the sharpest sting, and Herrick, who produced the sweetest honey, of all the Attic bees of the time; a time remarkable for the excellence of its light literature—which in poetic epigram, in wit winged with fancy, has never been outdone. The satirist of Anne's reign was a viper inside a bundle of dry sticks. The Caroline satirist was more Aristophanic, and shook his poisonous dew from the bells of flowers.

In an exhibition of this kind, the historical student feels that he is paying a visit to his illustrious friends among the dead. He turns naturally to those who, "having done what deserves to be written, or written what deserves to be read," have long filled a place in the spiritual which he desires to see them occupy in the bodily eye. It is a kind of introduction that he gets to men whom he has long desired to know. Thus, with what natural curiosity he turns to Lord Herbert of Cherbury, or Falkland "the virtuous and the just!" Lord Powis, who represents Lord Herbert of Cherbury, has sent two portraits of him, one an oval bust (No. 622), which we prefer to the full length (No. 628). This bust was probably executed in Italy. It has the look of Italian work, though not of the very best class. And we all know that Lord Herbert of Cherbury was in Italy, where he told a pretty nun, who sang sweetly, that, die when she might, she need not change either face or voice in becoming an angel. His own face is that of a man of brains and sensibility. But where is his younger brother, the poet, the holy George? Has the family which unites the honours of Clive with those of the most truly distinguished branch of the Herberts no likeness of *him*? As there are two Herberts of Cherbury, so there are two Lord Falklands. Our own preference is given to that sent by Lord Arundell of Wardour, where the kindly open expression finds its way to all hearts (No. 619). But the other has an earnest and tender look, almost equally fascinating on careful study (No. 658). Both of them bear out what Clarendon tells us of a certain "simplicity" which belonged to Falkland's look, and which was thought to show him to a disadvantage compared with some of his lordlier contemporaries of his class. He has the air of one, however, to be loved dead as he was loved living; and the eye turns tenderly to his pretty wife, Lettice Morrison, on the opposite wall (No. 596.) She was the sister of his bosom friend, Sir Henry Morrison, his friendship with whom Ben Jonson celebrated in an "Ode Pindaric." The little circle of scholars and wits which met at Falkland's house, Great Tew, near Oxford, is only partially represented at South Kensington. Chillingworth is not there, nor Hammond. We find, however, one of his most constant guests, Bishop Morley (No. 1004), who deserves remembrance, were it only for one admirable *bon mot*, so little hacknied that we must repeat it here. A country squire having asked him "what the Arminians held," he said they held all the best bishoprics and deaneries in the English Church.

After exhausting the Western Gallery and Corridors, our reader must retrace his steps, and descend to the Lower Western and Lower Eastern Galleries, on the ground floor. Exhibitions are of no politics. Most men of sense now agree with Coleridge, that in reading about our great Civil War we can respect both sides. And no modern Roundhead refuses to relish a Cavalier by Vandyck, any more than a modern Cavalier objects to a Roundhead by Cooper or Walker. Pleasant and profitable hours may be spent in contemplating both. The crayon head of "Cromwell," by Cooper (No. 803), naturally takes the lead in interest over all other portraits of men of the Commonwealth. It is full of rugged life and moral concentration. There is an "Admiral Blake," too (No. 816), of Mr. Fountaine's, which is comparatively new to the general world, and exceeds in character, we think, the well-known Blake of Wadham (No. 818). "Cromwell's Mother" (No. 786,) has not the beauty on canvas which belongs to her in the miniatures. Ireton has been at last unfolded to the public gaze in his true image, having been long represented in portraiture by Sir John Minnes (No. 663). Among the grandest in this region, the beautiful little group of Howards in distemper (No. 712), attracts deserved admiration; as well as that of Algernon, tenth Earl of Northumberland, and his family (No. 719), where the child especially is one of the most agreeable creations of Vandyck. A delightful Vandyck, too, is his James Stuart, Duke of Richmond (No. 720), than whom Charles the First had no nobler kinsman or loyaller follower. The three little Sidneys (No. 780) are well worth looking at, for the young red-haired one holding the dog is the famous Algernon—a name which he took from his mother's family, the Percies. The Carew and Killigrew, from Windsor (No. 754), is an eminently splendid specimen of Vandyck; Killigrew, who faces the reader, being rendered with perfect grace and nobleness.

The Lower Eastern Gallery, which alone remains to be noticed, is the favourite part of the whole exhibition for the lovers of piquant gossip. Here are found the men and women of Charles the Second's time—of Pepys and Grammont, and the graver Evelyn. Bright eyes and bright sayings rule the hour, and the world is governed by kisses and epigrams. Pepys and Lely go together here, as Clarendon and Vandyck do in the gallery which we quitted last; or Holbein and Erasmus—Sir Antonio More and Shakspeare,—in the gallery with which we began. It is a world the "anecdote" of which is far better known than that of earlier worlds, however much less worth knowing, which in these matters does not count. Let us content ourselves with pointing out what is cleverest and pleasantest, for cleverness and pleasantness were the characteristic qualities of the period.

There are several Nell Gwyns, No. 841 being perhaps the prettiest, though the picture is terribly cracked. There is a delicious "Barbara Villiers, Duchess of Cleveland" (No. 851), a languishing houri of the true

Lely type; and another of her (No. 842) as "Minerva" (surely Venus would have been the more appropriate goddess?), hanging not far from the unlucky and ill-looking Catherine of Braganza (No. 837), from whom she drew many tears. The "Comtesse de Grammont" is pretty and characteristic (No. 844). The best Duchess of Portsmouth—that Louise de Querouaille whom our rude ancestors, as Macaulay says, called "Madam Carwell," is the Gascon (No. 845), and her boy, the Duke of Richmond's ancestor—from whom, too, Charles Fox was descended—is a very nice-looking lad, with much of his mother's face (No. 913). Lucy Walters is showy, and we fear a little brazen-looking (No. 839), while her son, the Duke of Monmouth, has little of Charles's distinctive look,—so little as to corroborate the views of those who thought his paternity doubtful (Nos. 836, 876, 1020). None of his portraits, however, are sent by the Duke of Buccleuch, who, more than anybody else, is interested in this small question of antiquarian detail. Those who care for this peculiar class of historical persons may be referred to "wanton Shrewsbury," a kinswoman of Lord Cardigan's, though the picture is only mediocre (No. 898). Eleanor Lady Byron's, also, is a sweetly pretty face (No. 866). The poet did not descend from this woman, but from another marriage. The philosophy of race, however, is left to shift for itself in the battle of artistic life. We have Barbara Villiers, but not the Villiers who was mother of the great Chatham. We have the profligate Wilmot, the second Earl of Rochester, but not his more worthy father. To be sure, many of us were agreeably disappointed in the features of this genial and certainly clever rake (No. 854). He looks a most innocent and hopeful youngster, and his head is painted with all the cleverness of the school then in vogue. There was no great power about the school of Lely, but a kind of refinement and ingenuity which has its own attraction. Lely never came so near Vandyck, as Vandyck in some of his best works, such as the "Carew and Killigrew" lately mentioned, came near Titian. In every age the portrait-painters and their sitters correspond to each other in a very notable way. You want a Holbein for an Erasmus, or a Vandyck for a Strafford; but a Lely does well enough for the noble friends and kinsfolk of a Lucy Walters or Moll Davis. The portraits of Charles the Second by no means bear out his character as "a merry monarch." On the contrary, he is, in some of the best of them, saturnine, and even sad. By an odd contradiction, the mistresses of his brother James are better-looking than tradition represents them to have been. The descendants of that king and Arabella Churchill (No. 1018) are still extant in the *noblesse* of France.

The more respectable men of Charles's age have not been overlooked. That stout old "tarpaulin," (to use one of the familiar words of the time,) Sir John Lawson, the admiral, is there (No. 847). He was one of the Commonwealth—who lived to become one of the Restoration—admirals, and died of wounds received in battle with the Dutch, having requested, before

his last fight, a small provision for his widow, about the payment of which Clarendon does not seem to have been so hopeful as could be wished. The old age of Hobbes is most effectively brought before us, especially in the portrait of the Duke of Devonshire (No. 954), with whose forefathers the philosopher lived and died. The All Souls' Jeremy Taylor (No. 962) is thought to be the best Jeremy Taylor extant: while the Kit-Cat Dryden, of Kneller, besides its intrinsic claims, is remarkable as having been derived by its present proprietor from Dryden's publisher, Tonson (No. 1000.) "His portraits," says Sir Walter Scott, "bespeak the look and features of genius; especially that in which he is drawn with his waving grey hairs." The grey hairs are waving in this portrait, to which Sir Walter evidently alluded. It would be well if the whole series of portraits of which it is one, could be obtained on any tolerable terms for the nation.

The general verdict of the Rambler through these galleries,—our notes on which must here cease,—will certainly be that the whole exhibition is highly attractive, instructive, and successful. All success is, no doubt, more or less imperfect. There is nothing in the rooms from Woburn, Wilton, Petworth, or Belvoir, in all of which—to say nothing of more humble but still ancient establishments—treasures of portraiture exist. Nevertheless a great deal has been accumulated, and disposed and illustrated in such a way as to be very useful and agreeable. Let us hope that the exhibition of next year may be even better; and let us all do our best in our different spheres to make it so; not forgetting to be grateful to the Earl of Derby for a suggestion which has borne such good and pleasant fruit.